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Sudan rejects separate security for south

ABUJA (R) — Sudan's northern-dominated government has rejected a Nigerian proposal at peace talks in Abuja that separate security arrangements be applied in southern Sudan. Government spokesman Ali Al Hajj Mohammed told reporters Khartoum could not accept the proposal made at the Nigerian-brokered talks to end a decade-old civil war with southern rebels. Nigeria proposed that during an interim period, the Sudanese armed forces and the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) should remain separately administered. It suggested an interim government headed by an SPLA member be set up for southern Sudan with a range of powers that include maintaining peace and security in the region. Niall Deng, spokesman for John Garang's mainstream SPLA, said his movement was generally satisfied with Nigeria's proposals. "We are not opposing most of the proposals. We find the proposals quite good," he told Reuters Friday. On Thursday, the government and SPLA agreed Islamic law should not operate in the south but they remained divided over whether Sharia should apply to southerners living in the capital of Khartoum. The SPLA wants Khartoum to operate a multi-legal system with laws of a secular central authority taking precedence.

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Nadir says he fled to tell his story

KYRENIA, Cyprus (R) — Fugitive Turkish Cypriot tycoon Asil Nadir said Friday he had to leave Britain to be able to tell his side of the Polly Peck investigations and the legal procedures. "There was absolutely no possibility of getting a fair trial because of all the squalidness," told reporters in Kyrenia in north Cyprus. The whole affair had been "clouded in secrecy either by threats of contempt of court or by hearings in camera and hearings in chambers," he added. Mr. Nadir, appearing before the press for the second time since his arrival in north Cyprus after skipping bail in Britain, refused to answer any questions after reading a written text. British police said Mr. Nadir had been involved in a second investigation, unrelated to fraud and theft charges pending against him. Media reports said the investigation was related to an attempt by Mr. Nadir's associates to bribe the judge in the Serious Fraud Office (SFO), case against Mr. Nadir, who was to stand trial in September. In the event the judge was never contacted by the associates, the reports said, and there was no evidence to show Mr. Nadir was personally involved in the alleged plot. Mr. Nadir, skipped a record £3.5 million (\$5.5 million) bail and is now in north Cyprus. A British court issued an arrest warrant for him on Thursday.

Jordan part of Cambodian poll team

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker has approved Jordan's participation in an international committee to supervise U.N.-sponsored elections in Cambodia during the last week of May. Ministry of Interior Secretary General Salameh Hammad said the ministry had set up a team headed by the director of the ministry's administrative affairs department, Abdul Qader Al Habbabeh. He said the delegation, which will leave for Cambodia Sunday, includes 10 administrative governors and heads of departments.

Preparations start for Catholic meeting

AMMAN (Petra) — Roman Catholic Patriarch of Jerusalem and the Middle East Michel Al Sabbah arrived in Amman Friday to prepare for holding the first Arab Catholic conference in Amman. Bishop Saleem Al Sayegh told the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that the conference, which will open in mid-May, will represent more than six million Catholics in the Arab World. The conference, he said, will discuss the conditions of the Palestinian people living in the occupied Arab territories, means of enhancing national unity and Islamic-Christian dialogue.

Brotherhood stages rally

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Muslim Brotherhood led a Middle East peace talks protest through the Wihdat Palestinian refugee camp Friday. About 300 leaders and supporters of the Brotherhood called for a halt to the Arab-Israeli talks at a demonstration after Friday prayers.

Noel Foundation team ends visit

AMMAN (J.T.) — The president and members of the Noel Foundation, an international developmental organization, leave Amman today after a five-day visit at the invitation of Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Bint Talal. The delegation visited Queen Alia Fund (QAF) projects and social community development centres in Madaba, Ma'een, Mleiha, Taibeh, Aqaba and Deisah. The guests were introduced to the various projects the QAF has implemented in the past fifteen years to help the underprivileged sections of the Jordanian society improve their lives and help themselves. In particular, they visited the projects that generate income for rural women.

DFLP claims attack

AMMAN (AFP) — A Palestinian group Friday claimed an armed attack on an Israeli police officer who it said was wounded at dawn Thursday near Rehovot south of Tel Aviv. In a Communiqué received by AFP in Amman, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) "Red Star" paramilitary arm, said one of its commando units had opened fire at 0200 GMT on the officer's vehicle, hitting him in the chest and arm. The DFLP said the officer was rushed to hospital where he remained in serious condition. Israeli reports from occupied Jerusalem said an unidentified man pumped five bullets with a revolver into the officer who was at a stoplight, wounding him in the chest and arm.

UAE withholding PLO contributions

DOHA (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is withholding some \$12 million in contributions destined for the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) a Palestinian source in the Gulf said Friday. The funds represent three years worth of contributions collected from the salaries of Palestinians working in the UAE and amount to a total of 43 million dirhams (\$11.7 million), the source said. According to the source, Palestinians in the UAE set aside five per cent of their salaries as contributions for the PLO in 1990, 1991 and 1992. But the UAE only sent the PLO 10 million dirhams (\$3.6 million) in 1992, following the intervention of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, the source added.

PLO rejects Israel's self-rule proposal

TUNIS (Agencies) — The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) rejected an Israeli draft agreement on Palestinian self-rule Friday, saying it offered little new and warning that Middle East peace talks were heading for impasse.

"We totally reject such a project which gives only some municipal powers to the Palestinians to reduce the weight of occupation while legitimising it," PLO spokesman Yasser Abed Rabbo told Reuters.

"Such a project again puts the peace negotiations on the road to impasse," Mr. Abed Rabbo said. Israel gave Palestinian negotiators in Washington Thursday a draft of a joint declaration of principles as the framework of an interim self-government agreement for the Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The mood of PLO officials turned to pessimism after they examined the Israeli proposal. "Finally, no one can expect a serious move from Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin who is the prisoner of the radical wing of his government," a senior PLO official who asked to not be named told Reuters.

The rejection followed signs of some progress in Washington in negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians, Jordan and Lebanon, while talks between Israel and Syria were deadlocked (see page 5).

All sides had agreed to continue the latest round of talks into a third week.

Both the Israelis and Palestinians had said they hoped they might agree the declaration of

principles before the end of this round.

Israeli spokesman Yossi Gal had said Israel and the Palestinians had got down to dealing with "the essence of self government — structure, legislation, elections, land, water and other questions that are at the heart of negotiations."

The Palestinian rejection followed eight rounds of fruitless argument and a four-month suspension caused by Israel's expulsion of 415 Palestinians in December.

The Palestinians negotiators only resumed talks last month under intense pressure and badly need concrete progress to show their people the peace process is working and justify their return.

PLO sources said Faisal Al Hussein, overall coordinator of the Palestinian team, and several colleagues were on their way from Washington to PLO headquarters in Tunis for consultations.

Mr. Abed Rabbo said the Israeli draft contained little new. It was "not different from the previous projects presented during the era of (former Israeli Prime Minister) Yitzhak Shamir," he said.

"It gives some prerogatives such as health and education to the Palestinians, while maintaining military and security domination," he added.

The document "ignores (Arab East) Jerusalem and wants to consecrate the maintaining of (Jewish) settlements," Mr. Abed Rabbo said.

He denied reports by the Israeli press that Israel offer included acceptance of international

control of elections in which the Palestinians would choose their self-government authority.

Mr. Rabin's spokesman declined to comment, saying any response would come from Israel's peace team in Washington.

A Lebanese negotiator carried an Israeli proposal made at the peace talks in Washington back to Beirut for further consultations with the Lebanese government, officials said Friday.

They said Ambassador Khalil Mekawi, the deputy chief of the Lebanese delegation at the talks, arrived in Beirut late Thursday. He was to report to Foreign Minister Faris Bouez and other senior officials Friday.

Mr. Bouez said Thursday the Israeli proposal, made earlier this week, contained "positive signs that need some clarifications."

He said Mr. Mekawi would carry the Lebanese response back to Washington when the round resumes for a third and final week Monday.

Diplomats in Washington said Thursday that Israel had proposed the outline of a peace settlement with Lebanon which indicated that Israeli troops would withdraw from southern Lebanon if border security arrangements could be agreed.

Israel's sealing of the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip for nearly six weeks has underscored the Israeli-Palestinian struggle (Continued on page 2)

Israelis favour use of force to bar pullout, page 2

Jordan tries to avert Jordanians' losses from invalidation of Iraqi currency

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordanian authorities are in contact with the Iraqi government in an effort to avert the potential losses of Jordanians from Wednesday's Iraqi move to invalidate part of its pre-1990 banknotes. Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) Governor Mohammad Saeed Al Nabulsi said Friday.

"We are in touch with the Iraqi authorities over the issue, and hope to have a clear picture of the situation in the next two days," Dr. Nabulsi told the Jordan Times.

The CBJ governor said: "The contacts (with Iraq) are of a general nature without specific reference to any category."

He was answering a question whether Jordan was specifically seeking to ensure that Jordanian exporters who have taken Iraqi banknotes in payment for goods would be compensated for their losses.

It was usual for the Central Bank of Iraq, acting in concert with other concerned ministries and departments, to pay in hard Iraqi currency to pay for imports. In turn, the traders used to take out the money out of Iraq under a special permission and exchange it in the open market.

"It's not a secret that substantial quantities of Iraqi money in Jordan were not smuggled but were brought out with the consent of the Iraqi authorities," Abdullah En-

sour, minister of industry and trade, was quoted as saying by Reuters.

Dr. Nabulsi said the CBJ did not have any official assessment of the volume of the invalidated 25-dinar banknotes in Jordan. But he expressed his personal opinion that it could be in the range of 400 to 500 million Iraqi dinars.

Calculated at 30 Jordanian fils to the dinar, the value of the estimated volume would be around JD 15 million. But independent dealers and banking officials say Jordanians could have lost as much as \$100 million.

Fahed Fanek, a columnist for the Jordan Times and Al Ra'i, wrote Friday that Jordanians held less than two per cent of the invalidated Iraqi currency.

The CBJ governor, who Wednesday asked the security authorities to enforce a total ban on the entry of any Iraqi currency to Jordan, said the Kingdom had not proposed any mechanism or formula to ensure that the invalidation of the so-called "Swiss" notes did not affect Jordanians.

The Iraqi government has set a Monday deadline for the exchange of all 25-dinar "Swiss" notes to the Al Rasheed and Al Rafidain bank branches within the country. Iraq has closed its borders until

(Continued on page 2)

Halt of Iraqi oil supply not seen posing problem, page 3



A Jordanian trader displays his holding of Iraqi dinars rendered potentially worthless by the Iraqi government last week (photo by Yousef Al 'Allan)

Kuwait blocking initiative to heal Arab rifts

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Kuwait is blocking an initiative to heal inter-Arab differences and achieve reconciliation among Arab countries, Arab League Secretary-General Esmat Abdul Meguid has indicated.

The Qatari News Agency (QNA) quoted Dr. Abdul Meguid as confirming reports that Kuwait was behind the dropping of such a formal initiative during a meeting of the Arab League council in Cairo last month.

According to reporters at that time, the proposal, one of the themes that went through the corridors but did not materialise on the table, was to set up a tripartite committee — Egypt, Morocco and Mauritania — to settle inter-Arab differences.

In the proposal, presented by Dr. Abdul Meguid was reportedly vetoed by Kuwait.

In his latest comments, Dr. Abdul Meguid said he was re-launching the initiative.

The initiative, he said, calls on the Arab countries to mutually respect their sovereignty over their national soil and reject intimidation or the use of force to resolve their disputes.

The initiative, he said, also includes setting up an Arab troika similar to the European troika, being the former chairman of the Arab League, Egypt, the current chairman, Morocco, and the next chairman, Mauritania, to work side by side with the League secretary general to clear the Arab atmosphere.

Speaking at a seminar at the Egyptian Press Association Wednesday, Dr. Abdul Meguid said Kuwait "held the view that time was not ripe for discussing the issue at the meeting of the Arab League council last month."

Thus, he added, "the council decided to refer the issue to Arab heads of state."

Dr. Abdul Meguid will soon embark on a tour of Arab states

Jordan asks EC for debt relief

By Rana Sabbagh
Reuters

AMMAN — Jordan, trying to pare down its \$7.3 billion foreign debt, has asked the 12-nation European Community (EC) for debt relief to help it sustain economic growth.

The request, which noted Jordan's support for Middle East peace talks, was made in a letter sent by the Finance Ministry in late March and made available to Reuters on Friday.

The letter said Jordan faced rising unemployment, increasing poverty and a sharp drop in living standards and it could not afford to ease these problems because of debt repayment.

"Under these circumstances, the support given to Jordan to alleviate its debt rescheduling is most inadequate and does not provide the necessary conditions for sustainable growth," it said.

"We therefore seek the support of the European Community as well as the countries of the EC to enable Jordan to get total or partial debt reduction."

European diplomats said their governments had taken the letter

as a specific request for reduction of the EC debt. Some said it was the first time Jordan, which has pleaded for bilateral debt relief in the past, had approached the EC as a group.

But one diplomat said that EC states, grappling with their own economic and budgetary problems, were unlikely to accept such a request which could set precedents for other debtors.

About 23 per cent of Jordan's total \$7.3 billion foreign debt is owed to EC member countries and institutions.

Debt servicing for the European loans, the letter said, was expected to total about \$180 million a year between 1993 and 1995.

Debt repayment, it added, accounted for about 25 per cent of recurring public spending.

Jordan told the EC debt relief would help sustain growth backed by a seven-year International Monetary Fund-agreed reform plan.

"Jordan is at present playing a constructive role in the Middle East peace process. This policy is not supported by a large segment

of political parties in the country," the letter added.

Amman has rescheduling part of its debts to the Paris Club of official Western creditors and is currently negotiating debt restructuring with its commercial creditors.

The letter renewed Jordan's request for debt reductions to help compensate it for losses caused by the 1990-1991 Gulf crisis. The Kingdom said U.N. trade sanctions imposed on Iraq after it invaded Kuwait in August 1990 were costing Jordan \$250 million a year, mainly in lost business with Baghdad.

Jordan boasted 11 per cent economic growth in 1992 and its stock market gains were among the highest in the world, mainly due to a mini-booms caused by International Monetary Fund (IMF) directed reforms and the return of over 300,000 Jordanians from Kuwait after the Gulf crisis.

But many officials and private economists express fears that the recovery in Jordan's debt-burdened economy may not be sustainable without further economic reform and assistance.

Rabin faces major crisis in coalition

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin is presenting a leading dove in his cabinet with a bitter choice — step down to appease another coalition partner or be responsible for the collapse of Middle East peace talks.

Israel's current coalition crisis, the most serious since Mr. Rabin took office 10 months ago, underscores how vulnerable the peace talks are to domestic political instability.

On Friday, Israeli newspapers outlined a scenario in which Mr. Rabin would put Education Minister Shulamit Aloni in the position of either quitting to satisfy a religious faction or causing the fall of the government — and an end to the peace talks.

"Rabin is not firing Aloni. He is leaving a loaded pistol on the table and leaving the room," political columnist Nahum Barnea wrote in the Yedioth Ahronoth daily.

The ultra-orthodox Shas party set off the crisis Thursday, saying it would quit the coalition Sunday unless Mrs. Aloni, leader of the

leftist Meretz bloc, was fired from her cabinet job. Mrs. Aloni is hated by observant Jews for her liberal social views.

Without Shas, Mr. Rabin could cling to power with the outside support of Arab legislators, but would be bereft of his "Jewish majority" in parliament seen as vital for the peace talks.

Mr. Rabin met with Mrs. Aloni and Shas leader Aryeh Deri Thursday but was unable to find a compromise.

Mr. Deri said Mrs. Aloni had insulted religious sensibilities just too many times. "We and Meretz are like milk and meat," Mr. Deri said, referring to Jewish dietary laws requiring separation of the two.

Mrs. Aloni was adamant about staying on. "This is Rabin's problem, not mine," Israel Radio quoted her as saying Friday.

Mr. Rabin Friday cancelled a trip to Strasbourg, France planned for Monday.

Few people noticed when Mrs. Aloni declared that Mr. Rabin

Rabbani appeals to Rafsanjani

NICOSIA (R) — Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani has appealed to Iran to mediate between Afghan factions whose quarrels have sparked rocket attacks on Kabul again, Iran's IRNA news agency said Friday.

It said a message from Mr. Rabbani for President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani was delivered in Tehran Thursday, the day nine rockets crashed into the Afghan capital, killing two people and wounding 12 according to Kabul Radio.

Urging Mr. Rafsanjani to launch a mediation drive, Mr. Rabbani said the Afghan government "believes that Your Excellency's role and personality would be effective in removing misunderstandings" among Afghan factions, IRNA said.

The Afghan Ministry of Defence blamed the headline Hezb-e-Islami of Prime Minister-designate Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and its Shiite Hezb-e-Wahdat allies for attacking government positions Thursday.

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Pakistanis aim to keep Mogadishu calm

By Paul Alexander
The Associated Press

MOGADISHU — It was great evening for a ride Thursday — cool breezes after a steamy day, another brilliant orange sunset and a full, yellow moon looming on the horizon.

The Pakistani soldiers, with new blue U.N. badges pinned to their khaki uniform sleeves, were not paying attention to the setting. They were looking for trouble and guns.

Much of Operation continue Hope's hope for success in rebuilding Somalia lies in the Pakistanis' ability to keep Mogadishu's streets at least as safe as they became under the Marines who just left.

Somalis worry whether the Pakistanis are tough enough for the job. The Pakistanis know they will be tested, by chance or design. They say they're ready to hit back the first time to set an example.

So far, their transition period has been pretty smooth. The bulk of the 4,700 Pakistanis arrived in last April. The Marines shared patrols with them for a few days before the United States turned over control of Operation Restore Hope to the United Nations.

"We were nervous at first, but now we have enough confidence," said Lieutenant Arif Rehman.

The problem is winning the people's confidence and respect. Somalis view the Pakistanis as

weak because they were unable to halt looters while protecting the port last year. A U.S.-led coalition was called in to safeguard food shipments to the starving.

The Pakistanis point out they had only 500 men at the time and were operating under much stricter rules of engagement that restricted them to shooting only if fired upon.

Until their U.N. vehicles arrive later this month, they are out there in the dark green, right-hand drive Toyota pickup trucks bought from a dealer in Karachi.

Four soldiers in the back carry SMG rifles, a takeoff on the AK-47. A fifth mans the 7.62-caliber, belt-fed machine gun mounted in the truck bed.

Two trucks, separated by about 50 metres, cruised slowly Thursday evening down a main road scattered with bone-jarring potholes and lined with piles of burning trash. Women and children carried loads of water or firewood home. Donkey-drawn carts carried heavier loads.

Suddenly, the lead truck accelerated. It pulled alongside a battered pickup truck, motioned the driver over, sped up again and nosed across the road to prevent any chance of escape.

Universal sign language got the six passengers out for a quick frisk. A search of the vehicle turned up no guns. With an "OK, thank you very much," the patrol was on the move again.

It cruised through a market even after dark was bustling with food stands and vendors



Somali children play games with an abandoned machine-gun on a street leading to Mogadishu (AFP photo)

selling bundles of the mildly narcotic khat leaves that are widely chewed here. Gas-powered lanterns abounded. Generators powered a few fluorescent street lights.

Although a couple of kids made obscene gestures after begging for water or other handouts, most waved and yelled "Zindabad Pakistan" Urdu for "Long live Pakistan."

The 90-minute patrol was uneventful. The soldiers searched about a dozen vehicles overall

and found no weapons. No children threw rocks. No gunshots rang out.

There are tradeoffs involved in having the Pakistanis replace the American forces who controlled Mogadishu and Merca until last week.

Most Somalis speak only Somali and maybe some English, Italian or Arabic. While Pakistani officers generally speak fairly good English and one accompanies each patrol, most enlisted men speak only Urdu and maybe a little Arabic.

Before they go out on the streets, the soldiers are taught a few key phrases in Somali, like "Get out of the car," "Lay down" and "disperse."

The Pakistanis figure any language barriers are more than balanced by the fact they share a religion with the overwhelming Muslim Somalis.

"That is the biggest advantage we have," said Captain Sharif Tariq. "Language is not that much of a barrier. And our people are learning their language."

PLO rejects Israel's proposal

(Continued from page 1)

over the future of Arab East Jerusalem.

Mr. Rabin, when closing off the occupied territories, also slapped a ring of army roadblocks around the Holy City cutting of Palestinians from their cultural, economic and spiritual centre.

Israel, making a symbolic gesture to East Jerusalem Arabs, agreed last month to sit down with Mr. Hussein, a prominent Palestinian leader from East Jerusalem, at the peace talks in Washington.

But seeking to assert its view of Jerusalem as Israel's "eternal capital," it closed off the city.

"I believe Israel wants to turn its annexation of the city into a fait accompli," said Ibrahim Al Dakkak, a leading Arab authority on Jerusalem.

Mr. Dakkak said he believed

Israel may offer to lift the blockade ultimately but only after wringing concessions from Palestinian negotiators, including a recognition of Israel's "sovereignty" over the city.

Israel has barred West Bank and Gaza Palestinians from Jerusalem and Israel before. But it appears intent on making this closure, prompted by Arab attacks, long-lasting.

Brigadier-General Gadi Zohar, head of the West Bank "civil administration," was asked at a briefing on Thursday if he had been ordered to plan for a semi-permanent or long-term ban. He said: "Yes, that's right."

"It's for a long period at least," Mr. Zohar added.

Israeli bulldozers were working Friday to prepare a detour road around East Jerusalem meant to link the northern part of the West

Bank with the south while bypassing the city. Israel also tried to run a bus shuttle service from Ramallah to Bethlehem without stopping in Jerusalem and ordered Palestinians to obtain special permits for entering the city.

"We are easing the closure, but controlling (the flow of) movement of Palestinians into Israel," said Oded Ben-Ami, Mr. Rabin's defence ministry spokesman.

"We are not excluding Jerusalem from Israel... there is no question about the future of Jerusalem as the undivided capital of Israel," he said.

Palestinians have resisted the Israeli closure of Jerusalem in what little ways they can.

Many Palestinian institutions based in Jerusalem and staffed by West Bank residents have chosen to cut down their services rather than apply for permits, fearing to do otherwise would be viewed as recognition of the closure.

Rabin faces coalition crisis

(Continued from page 1)

should not have added a traditional Jewish prayer to a state anniversary of the Jewish uprising against the Nazis in the Warsaw ghetto.

But for the orthodox politicians of Shas, it was the last straw. The United Torah Judaism party has called a censure motion against the government for Monday in parliament over Mrs. Aloni.

An exasperated Rabin moaned Thursday: "I can't believe that people who never stop talking about peace can create problems that could break up the coalition and thereby put an end to the peace process."

Political commentators on Friday said Mr. Rabin's plan was to let Mr. Deri submit his letter of resignation as interior minister to Sunday's cabinet session.

It takes 48 hours for the resignation to take effect, and during this time, there will be strong

pressure on the Meretz bloc — which has so far rallied behind Mrs. Aloni — to have her to step down voluntarily.

A senior government official, speaking on condition of anonymity, confirmed that Mr. Rabin was sitting back and not trying to defuse the crisis.

As always in Israeli politics, political commentators saw a more cynical side to the crisis.

They noted the Meretz-Shas confrontation may be linked to a police investigation into allegations. Mr. Deri stole government funds that is drawing to a close after nearly three years.

It is possible, wrote Hanna Kim in the liberal Hadasot daily, that Mr. Rabin hopes to set off a cabinet reshuffle in which Mr. Rabin would replace the staunch justice minister, David Libai, with someone more sympathetic to Mr. Deri's cause.

"Deri, they say, today talks about Aloni, but is thinking about David Libai," she wrote. "If

it was up to Deri, they say in the Labour Party, he would like to see a game of musical chairs."

Getting rid of Mrs. Aloni also would serve Mr. Rabin and his centre-left Labour Party in another way. They have been trying to broaden the coalition government by bringing in another religious party, the United Torah Front, which has refused to join a cabinet with Mrs. Aloni.

Other commentators said Shas simply wants to engineer Mrs. Aloni's ouster to score points with its hawkish constituents, some of whom have been camping outside the home of Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, Shas' spiritual mentor.

Yedioth columnist Barnea noted that Shas has two problems, the Deri affair and pressure on Rabbi Yosef by opponents of the peace talks.

"None of these will be solved by removing Aloni... unless the rumours are true that Rabin is trying to do a cabinet reshuffle on Aloni's back," Mr. Barnea wrote.

Sixth person charged in New York bombing

NEW YORK (AP) — A Palestinian who was held as a suspect in the World Trade Centre blast was charged Thursday with conspiracy to destroy the building.

Ahmad Ajaj, 27, was the sixth person charged in the case. The Feb. 26 blast in the heart of New York's financial district killed six people and injured a thousand.

Mr. Ajaj told the Associated Press recently that he illegally entered the country last year carrying bogus passports and do-it-yourself bomb-making books.

Mr. Ajaj, because of his illegal arrival, was in a federal jail in Manhattan when the explosion rocked the trade centre complex on Feb. 26, killing six people and injuring more than 1,000 others.

He was freed on March 1 but taken back into custody eight days later.

The federal charges, distributed to the media by his attorney, detailed his arrival on Sept. 1, 1992, and the approximately 12 bomb manuals that federal authorities seized from him.

Mr. Ajaj's attorney, Lynne Stewart, faxed the charges to the Associated Press, and U.S. prosecutors were not immediately available for comment.

Ms. Stewart said in a news release that Mr. Ajaj was to be arraigned on Friday in federal court. She could not be reached for further comment.

The federal complaint came a day after Ms. Stewart held a news conference to complain that federal authorities had been holding Mr. Ajaj for two months without charges.

The twin towers of the trade centre, the World's second-tallest building, were shaken to their foundations by the February explosion. Some 230 kilograms of chemicals were set off in a van parked in a garage adjoining the building complex.

Authorities have said the chemicals, readily available through illegal means, were mixed in the deadly combination at a storage locker in New Jersey. The charges against Mr. Ajaj said his bomb manuals contained chemicals and compounds like those found in the locker, including

urea and nitric acid.

In addition to the deaths and injuries, hundreds of millions of dollars in property damage were caused by the explosion.

In the worldwide investigation that followed, Middle East extremists was the focus.

The six men who have been charged so far all have been linked to mosques in Brooklyn and Jersey City where followers of fundamentalist Muslim cleric Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman often preached.

Federal investigators have established several links between Mr. Ajaj and another of the suspects, Ramzi Ahmad Yousef, the charges filed Thursday said.

They said a fingerprint expert identified Mr. Yousef's prints on two of the bomb manuals seized from Mr. Ajaj.

They also said that Mr. Yousef and Mr. Ajaj carried identification documents using the same alias, "Khurram Khan," when they entered the United States.

Mr. Yousef, 25, previously of Jersey City, has not been arrested, and federal investigators believe he has fled the country. The Immigration and Naturalisation Service says Mr. Yousef, born in the Gulf region, is a "professed Iraqi citizen."

The others charged, and being held, are: Mahmoud Abu Halima, of Egypt and allegedly a key organiser of the bombing; Nidal Ayyad, a naturalised American of Palestinian descent, Mohammad A. Saleh of Jordan, and Bilal Alkaisy who has been identified as both Lebanese and Jordanian.

A sixth suspect, Ibrahim Al Gabrowny, 42, of Egypt, is being held without bail but is charged only with obstructing justice after a fight with two federal agents executing a search warrant.

The complaint charges that Mr. Ajaj, Mr. Saleh, Mr. Ayyad, Mr. Abu Halima, Mr. Kaisy and Mr. Yousef "and others known and unknown, unlawfully, willfully, knowingly and with malice would and did damage and destroy, and attempt to damage and destroy, by means of fire and an explosive, a building used in interstate commerce."

Israelis favour force to bar return of land to Arabs

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Most Israelis back settlers using force to bar a withdrawal from the Golan Heights and against dismantling Jewish settlements in the West Bank.

A poll published Friday in the daily Yediot Aharonot said 53 per cent of Israelis against 38 per cent backed the decision of settlers in the Golan to resume to force against any pullout while nine per cent were undecided.

Conversely, 67 per cent of Israelis opposed the use of arms by settlers in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip to prevent the creation of a Palestinian police force in line with a negotiated autonomy plan.

Thirty-two per cent advocated the use of arms in the West Bank and one per cent was undecided.

The survey of 530 Jews was conducted Wednesday and Thursday by the Dahaf Institute. Fifty-four per cent of Israelis against 29.6 per cent would support or fight alongside armed settlers opposed to dismantling Jewish settlements in the West Bank, according to another poll by the daily Maariv.

It said 7.5 per cent were indifferent and 8.3 per cent undecided.

While 50.8 per cent versus 40.3 per cent support Palestinian autonomy in the occupied territories, 69.4 per cent said they hoped the settlements would remain under Israeli authority.

Another 14.2 per cent backed dismantling the settlements, 3.8 per cent supported Palestinian authority over them and 12.6 per cent were undecided.

Maariv's poll of 506 people was conducted by the Gallup Institute Monday and Tuesday.

On Thursday, a leading think-tank official said 10,000 Israeli settlers were ready to take up arms and fight against Palestinian rule in the occupied territories.

Joseph Alpher, deputy director of Tel Aviv University's Jaffee Centre for Strategic Studies, told Thursday's Jerusalem Post that the settlers would fight a Palestinian police force and the transfer of any security powers from Israel to the Palestinians.

Mr. Alpher based his views on meetings with settlers, who number 120,000 in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and security officials.

Settlers' leaders have protested against plans to set up an armed Palestinian police force for an autonomous regime and one has even called on Jews to shoot any Palestinian with a gun, police or not.

In another development, Israeli peace delegation spokesman Yossi Gal said his country had accepted international monitoring of elections in the occupied territories.

He told Israeli Radio Friday from Washington his delegation Thursday presented an eight-point working paper to Palestinian negotiators saying Israel had accepted "external (international) monitors" to the election of members of a Palestinian council that will administer the five-year autonomy plan in the territories.

Mr. Gal said the document represented an agreement hammered out with the Palestinians this week, adding that Israel now awaited a swift Palestinian response.

He said it listed the basis on which the talks must be pursued and defined "the aim of the negotiations and the different components of the autonomy regime."

Iran to vet candidates for presidency

TEHRAN (R) — Some of the 128 men who signed up to run for Iran's presidency on June 11 are too young or inexperienced to stand, a member of the council vetting the candidates said Friday.

Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati said the Guardian Council was likely to review their qualifications and announce the list of eligible candidates within eight days.

Incumbent President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, a pragmatist cleric running on a platform of economic reforms, is widely expected to win a second four-year term.

13 killed in Somalia

MOGADISHU (AFP) — Belgian U.N. paratroopers stationed in the southern city of Kismayu fought off a raid Friday by supporters of Somali warlord Col. Omar Jess, a spokesman for the U.N. operation in Somalia said.

The attack left an unconfirmed death toll of 13, aid workers reported.

U.N. spokesman Major David Stockwell said at least one of the Belgian troops was injured in an exchange of fire as the Somali fighters tried to infiltrate the port city 400 kilometres southwest of here. He described the soldiers' condition as stable.

An unspecified number of the Somalis here "injured or killed" in the incident, he added.

In Brussels, a Belgian military spokesman said a Belgian officer was injured in the back during a heavy exchange of gunfire.

The raid was carried out by an unknown number of Col. Jess' faction stationed in the village of Goob Weyn, north of Kismayu, the military spokesman said. He reported the situation as calm there after the clash.

It was the first clash between blue berets and armed militiamen since Tuesday's handover of the U.S.-led Operation Restore Hope to a new U.N. command.

On Wednesday a blue beret from Zimbabwe was injured here by a bullet fired by a sniper.

Kismayu, a strategic port with a 160,000 population, is one of Somalia's main tension zones.

It is being fought over by both Col. Jess and rival warlord General Mohammad Said Hersi. Col. Jess and his supporters have accused the 900 U.N. peacekeeping troops stationed there of favouring Gen. Hersi.

Gen. Hersi evicted the last elements of Col. Jess' militia from Kismayu last month after a series of violent demonstrations and urban guerrilla attacks.

Jess supporters fled north into the Juba Valley, from where they have continued to launch small-scale raids.

Col. Jess was warned by the American-led U.N. multinational force in Somalia not to try to retake the port.

Clinton confident of enlisting Europe

(Continued from page 1)

the "brave decision" by Serbian-led Yugoslavia to cut off supplies to its Bosnian Serb allies and said this had to be given time to work.

Flanked by his new co-mediator Thorvald Stoltenberg, who recently took over from Mr. Vance, Lord Owen said: "We're living in very early days. This announcement from the Serbian government and the federal republic of Yugoslavia was only made late last night. Let its impact take effect."

Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic said that Serbs would comply with a United Nations resolution to establish "safe areas" in besieged Muslim cities.

Speaking to NBC television from Pale, Bosnia, Mr. Karadzic said: "We are going to comply fully and to coordinate with the U.N. personnel according to this resolution."

"We do think it would be better to find final political settlement, not safe havens, but... we will comply and help the realisation of this resolution," he told NBC's "Today Show."

The Security Council voted Thursday to declare "safe areas" around Bosnia's capital Sarajevo and five other Muslim towns besieged by Serbs.

Bosnian Serb forces were reported to be attacking the Muslim enclave of Zepa in eastern Bosnia Friday despite the threat of military intervention by the West.

Zepa, where about 40,000 civilians and refugees are besieged, is one of the Muslim-led towns and communities declared "safe areas."

Monday to check smuggling of the currency into the country.

Moneychangers in Jordan have suspended all dealings in Iraqi dinars, but the embattled currency was changing hands Thursday and Friday at around 10 fils.

"Many people seem to be betting on the chance that government intervention with Baghdad will result in Iraqi government honouring the invalidated notes held by Jordanians," a dealer said.

Thousands of Jordanians who were waging on the eventual recovery of the Iraqi dinar saw their life-savings wiped away by the withdrawal of the "Swiss" notes, particularly that there was a widely held belief that Iraq might resort to cancelling post-crisis banknotes rather than the pre-1990, British-printed currency.

Meanwhile Iraq's borders

remained closed Friday, with additional Iraqi soldiers deployed along the desert frontier to check smuggling of currency ahead of the Monday deadline for the exchange of the invalidated banknotes.

Diplomats arriving from Baghdad reported seeing very few trucks on the main highway between the Iraqi capital and the Trebeil border crossing and said a large number of trucks were on the Jordanian side of the frontier apparently awaiting the border closure to be lifted Monday.

Diplomats and official delegations were exempt on Thursday from the closure, which took effect Wednesday morning. But, according to sources, the closure was total Friday, with even Iraqi diplomats being denied entry into the country.

Relief agencies in Amman said they were trying to get

Kuwait blocking

(Continued from page 1)

to discuss with the leaders of these states the initiative. He said he does not mind including Iraq in his tour provided that the Iraqi authorities express willingness to resolve the problem of Kuwaiti prisoners of war.

The Arab League chief criticised the international community for its "double standard" in dealing with international and regional issues, saying, "when Libya is being pressured and punished for its refusal to implement U.N. Security Council resolution, the Security Council does not resort to exercising any pressure on Israel to force it to allow Palestinians expelled since last December to South Lebanon to go back to their homes in the occupied Arab territories."

special permission through the Iraqi embassy in Jordan for vehicles carrying humanitarian supplies. Some of them did get special permission Wednesday and Thursday, which explained the few trucks reported by the diplomats.

But no such permission was available Friday, sources said. The beefing up of border patrols was not limited to Iraq's frontier with Jordan, said an African diplomat who arrived here late Thursday.

According to sources quoted by the French news agency, AFP, about 100 elite Republic Guards have joined regular units of the army in patrolling the nearly 600-kilometre border with Jordan.

Smuggling from Jordan to Iraq had more or less been contained since mid-1992 following the building of a high sandwall along the desert frontier and increased Jordanian patrols.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

| JORDAN TELEVISION | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| Tel: 773111-19 | |
| PROGRAMME TWO | |
| 18:00 | Les Aventures de L'Espace |
| 18:30 | Envoyé Spécial |
| 19:00 | News in French |
| 19:15 | Envoyé Spécial |
| 19:30 | News in Hebrew |
| 20:00 | News in Arabic |
| 20:30 | Special programme |
| 21:00 | News in English |
| 22:00 | Feature Film: "Fatale Friendship" |
| 22:30 | Feature Film: "Fatale Friendship" |
| PRAYER TIMES | |
| 04:13 | Fajr |
| 05:59 | (Sunrise) Dhuha |
| 12:52 | Dhuhr |
| 16:12 | Asr |
| 19:25 | Maghreb |
| 20:52 | Isha |
| CHURCHES | |
| St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swaidah, Tel. 810740 | |
| Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785 | |
| St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590 | |
| Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440 | |
| De la Sable Church Tel. 661757 | |
| Terresanta Church Tel. 622366 | |
| Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541 | |
| Anglican Church Tel. 620851, Tel. 628543 | |
| Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331 | |
| Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261 | |
| St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751 | |
| Armenian International Church Tel. 652526 | |
| Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 623824, 654932 | |
| The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Tel. 654932 | |
| Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691 | |
| WEATHER | |
| Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology. | |
| Khamisni weather conditions will prevail today. Therefore, it will be hot, dry, dusty and partly cloudy. Winds will be southeasterly moderate freshening at times. In Aqaba, it will be partly cloudy and dusty, while winds will be southerly moderate and seas rough. | |
| Amman Min./Max. temp. 10 / 23 | |
| Aqaba 17 / 35 | |
| Deserts 9 / 30 | |
| Jordan Valley 14 / 33 | |
| Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 24, Aqaba 32, Humidity readings: | |

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------|
| Amman 22 per cent, Aqaba 26 per cent | Khalifeh pharmacy | 985417 |
| USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS | EMERGENCIES | |
| NIGHT DUTY | Food Control Centre | 637111 |
| | Civil Defence Department | 661111 |
| | Civil Defence Immediate Rescue | 630341 |
| AMMAN: | Civil Defence Emergency | 199 |
| Dr. Mohammad Al Sawwa | Rescue Police | 192, 621111, 637777 |
| Dr. Abdul Hadi Tayyoun | Fire Brigade | 891228 |
| Dr. Yousef Nusci | Black Bank | 775121 |
| Dr. Jameel Tarif | Highway Police | 843402 |
| Fires pharmacy | Police | 828432 |
| Ferdows pharmacy | Public Security Department | 630211 |
| Al Aqsa pharmacy | Hotel Complaints | 608900 |
| Natroukh pharmacy | Price Complaints | 661176 |
| Al Salam pharmacy | Wages and average | |
| Yacoub pharmacy | Complaints | 869767 |
| Shmeissni pharmacy | Amman Municipality | |
| Najib pharmacy | Complaints | 879711 |
| | Telephone Information (directory assistance) | 121 |
| IRBID: | Overseas Calls | 010230 |
| Dr. Ahmad Qanu | Central Amman Telephone | |
| Al Qudeh Pharmacy | Reprints | 623101 |
| | Abdali Telephone Reprints | 661101 |
| ZARQA: | Jordan Television | 772111 |
| Dr. Yahya Al Tarifi | Radio Jordan | 774111 |

Home News



HER MAJESTY Queen Noor Thursday visits the Save the Children 8th Annual Spring Exhibition. On display were products from the Bani Hamida weaving project and the Jordan River Designs Project. The weaving project provides economic opportunities for 870 Bani Hamida women in 12 villages. This year's exhibition differs from previous ones in its unique kaleidoscopic display of rugs in eight different settings. The settings, all of which were designed by Jordanians, blended the

traditional with the modern and drew upon the cultural heritage of women in Jordan. Exhibited at the Jordan River Designs Project, in which 1,000 women have participated, were embroidered quilts, cushions, wall hangings, lamp shades and picture frames. Receiving the Queen at the exhibition were Director of Noor Al-Husseini Foundation In'am Mufti (right), and Director of Save the Children Jordan Field Office Rebecca Salti (second from right)

Health infrastructure struggles — minister

GENEVA (Petra) — Health Minister Aref Al Bataineh Friday said Jordan's health infrastructure has started to suffer as a result of the unexpected population rise prompted by the 1990-1991 Gulf crisis.

Addressing the 46th session of the World Health Assembly in Geneva, Dr. Bataineh pointed out that this increase has aggravated Jordan's unemployment problem and led to congestion in schools, universities and other educational institutions, besides the negative impact it has had on the country's economy. He added that the Kingdom's economy was hit by the U.N.-imposed embargo against Iraq and the obstacles placed on international trade, particularly in the Aqaba sea port.

The minister said the progress made in achieving the World Health Organisation's (WHO) goals falls short of the aspirations of the international community. He stressed that the "Health for All" goal will not be achieved until oppressed nations are liberated and able to exercise their right to self-determination, free from any pressures or international intervention.



Aref Al Bataineh

Dr. Bataineh emphasised that establishing an international ethical order to organise the relations between the world nations through a global social charter is a prerequisite for reaching the "Health for All" target.

He said the aid provided by donor countries to support the health sector is an investment that can yield good results for that country because it helps prevent the outbreak of disease and epidemics, adding that illness and epidemics do not recognise official borders.

Temporary halt of Iraqi oil supply not seen as a problem to Jordan

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Iraq has suspended oil supplies to Jordan until Monday when it will lift a closure of borders imposed last week, but the suspension is not expected to pose any major problem for Jordan which has enough stocks to ride out the temporary halt.

The Iraqi government ordered the closure of the borders Wednesday to check currency smuggling after invalidating part of its pre-1990 banknotes in a bid to shore up the embattled Iraqi dinar.

Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Ali Abu Ragheb told the Jordan Times Friday that Iraqi authorities had informed Jordan that the suspension on the overland trucking of oil to the Kingdom was in a temporary measure and that the flow would be resumed Monday, when the border closure would be lifted.

"We tried to ensure that the flow is not disrupted but the Iraqi officials apologised and said they could not continue the supply during the closure period," Mr. Abu Ragheb said.

The minister said the Iraqi had

promised to send their own tankers to carry oil to Jordan once the closure is ended to make up for the shortfall in reserves caused by the suspension in supply.

The Jordan Petroleum Refinery Company at Zarqa received the last oil tanker from Iraq late Wednesday, completing the daily supply of 50,000 barrels of crude oil and 25,000 barrels of fuel oil.

The Kingdom's daily consumption is equal to the daily Iraqi supply.

"We are not facing any serious problem" as a result of the halt in the oil flow, Mr. Abu Ragheb said. "We have sufficient reserves of all types of oil and oil products and we don't anticipate any problems."

The minister declined to provide specific figures on Jordan's strategic oil reserves, but said the Kingdom was in a "comfortable" position to face the situation.

The Iraqi oil supply to Jordan is exempt from the sweeping international sanctions imposed against Iraq following its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait. The exemption has been granted by the U.N. sanctions committee in view of the fact that no money is changing hands since the exports are in repayment in-kind of

Iraq's debt to Jordan incurred during the 1980-1981 war.

It was the first time since the war that the Iraqi oil supply to Jordan was disrupted for more than 24 hours. During the war, Iraq oil tankers were blocked from the Persian Gulf by the United States and other coalition forces.

The Kingdom has received 5.5 million oil barrels from Iraq since the war ended in 1991 to make up for its shortfall.

Jordan and Iraq renewed their annual oil agreement in December under which Iraq supplies Jordan with free oil and Jordan pays for the transportation costs.

Travelers concerned about the suspension of the oil supply to Jordan have been assured by the Jordanian government that the border closure will not affect the flow of oil to the Kingdom.

Some of the fears were caused by the suspension of the oil supply to Jordan, which has been a major source of income for the Kingdom. The government has assured the public that the oil supply will be resumed by Monday.

Institutionalise democracy, urges former premier

AMMAN (Petra) — Former Prime Minister Ahmad Obaidat has called for institutionalising Jordan's democratic experience, basing it on meaningful dialogue among all political groups rather than on narrow interests and controversial action of various parties.

In a lecture he delivered Thursday at Yarmouk University, Mr. Obaidat said Jordan's four-year-old democratic experiment could have achieved more tangible progress in relations between the legislative and executive powers. Had it not been for extraordinary political circumstances witnessed by that period and what he saw as a preoccupation with side issues.

He voiced hope for a "more realistic" parliament during the next stage, stressing that the success of any parliament is a measure of how a whole system of government works.

Mr. Obaidat, who served as chairman of the Royal Commission that drew up Jordan's National Charter, called on administrators, employees and workers to prepare themselves for

dealing with public issues in a realistic and objective manner and to foster a new outlook and method, designed to serve the higher public interest. He emphasised the importance of political, administrative and social reform, saying that neither the National Charter, nor the entire body of laws in the country, can achieve that reform if human resources fail to be used effectively.

In his lecture, entitled "Democracy and the National Charter," Mr. Obaidat also reviewed the political map of Jordan and highlighted the need to learn from the history of political work in the country.

He called on citizens to shoulder their responsibility in selecting the most capable leaders in the country.

"Our society and nation do not tolerate any division," Mr. Obaidat said. He stressed the influential role of the mass media in relaying facts about Jordan's democratic experience and the need to debate major issues at every stage of Jordan's political development.

ICRC meeting demands protection for children caught in armed conflict

By Lima Nabil
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) ended a meeting in Amman Thursday evening demanding that protection be given to children who are victims of armed conflicts.

After a three-day meeting to discuss the implementation of international humanitarian law (IHL), a senior ICRC official, Amer Al Zimahi, said the meetings achieved their purpose in highlighting the main issues facing the world community as a result of abuse of IHL.

Although the scheduled round table discussion on Thursday was

cancelled because of technical difficulties, he said, the aims of the meeting were achieved in full.

Delegates from the ICRC and Arab countries took part in the deliberations to discuss ICRC activities and measures that should be taken to ensure various countries' respect for IHL.

The participants also recommended the formation of an international tribunal to try war criminals, said Mr. Zimahi at the end of the meetings at the Royal Cultural Centre.

The delegates discussed topics including violence and the plight of civilians in armed conflicts, Mr. Zimahi said.

He said the outcome of the deliberations will be submitted to the ICRC in Geneva for study

and future action.

The meeting pointed out the difficulties that emerged in the application of IHL and the role of the ICRC to help overcome them, according to Mr. Zimahi.

Tawfiq Bouachba, a professor of law in Tunis who took part in the meetings, said there is no alternative to humanitarian intervention in providing relief for the victims of conflicts.

The international humanitarian law provides for such intervention, he said.

Referring to the proposed tribunal for war criminals, he said, the law does not provide for exempting heads of state from punishment should they be found responsible for war crimes.

Muslim women in U.S. urge scientific reading of Koran

By Sausan Ghosheh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The North American Council for Muslim Women (NACMW) is urging women everywhere to read the Koran using scientific methods, ignoring previous interpretations and explanations especially those relating to women, said Sharifa Al Khatib, president of the NACMW, at a satellite symposium recently entitled "Muslim Women in America."

"We want to develop ideas that are based on the Koran and Hadith," she added.

Islam, Ms. Khatib said, is a liberator of women, not an oppressor. "One has to distinguish between traditions that may be oppressive of women and Islam," she maintained.

"Islam will become the second largest religion in the U.S. by the next century," Ms. Khatib said. Mosques, she added, do not "pay sufficient attention" to social issues and women's concerns, thus the creation of the NACMW.

The NACMW was founded in 1992 to educate the American public about Islam and to put an end to the stereotypes.

The NACMW acts as an information source on Islam, Muslim women and the Arab World. They organise seminars and workshops, form ties with the American media and professors

of women's studies, and publish books on related topics, Ms. Khatib said.

But she stressed that their efforts do not only target Americans, but "education should also be within the Muslim society."

A large sector of the Muslim community, she explained, finds difficulty, being mostly immigrants, in raising their children on the principles of Islam while living in a non-Muslim country, and dealing with the American society around them.

The NACMW, according to Ms. Khatib, helps these families and aims at integrating the Muslim community into the larger society.

Despite the different value systems present between the two cultures, she affirmed that it is possible for parents to instill Muslim values in their children by talking to them calmly and trying to convince them, and not by giving orders, which is usually done in the Arab World.

Ms. Khatib said the NACMW also attempts to educate Muslims on the rights of women, adding that Muslim women in the U.S. are better off than Western women.

"Muslim women, in America, are not treated worse than women of other religions... they are respected by their fathers, brothers and husbands," Ms. Khatib, who holds a master's degree in comparative religions.

But, she stressed that the media plays a major role in spreading stereotypes about Muslim women and in exaggerating any incident of female mistreatment in the Muslim community.

"If women cover their heads (in the U.S.) it is taken as a sign of their oppression," Ms. Khatib said. Women who choose to wear the veil find it hard to be accepted in the workplace, she added.

Ms. Khatib said that in some cases women were pressured to leave their jobs and in others they were not hired.

She stated that Muslims in America do not have any "ambitions" to establish an Islamic state in the U.S. "Islam did not specify a political system for us... we are working through the present system... we try to be effective and active members in society... through our moral behaviour we can be seen as a positive force for change."

The NACMW, Ms. Khatib emphasised, is an economically and politically independent organisation that cooperates with other organisations in the U.S., such as women's groups and other religious associations, to reach its goals.

The satellite symposium was a World Net programme aired at the American Centre and included participants from Jordan, Jerusalem, Algeria and the United States.

UNRWA warns of cuts in services to refugees

AMMAN (J.T.) — United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) Commissioner-General Ilter Turkmen warned of a substantial reduction in services to Palestine refugees "if contributions to the agency's \$28.5 million deficit were not forthcoming."

Speaking at UNRWA's informal meeting of governments held at agency headquarters in Vienna on May 6 and 7, Mr. Turkmen told representatives of 24 governments and the European Community that the closure of the Israeli occupied territories constituted a "new emergency" which placed additional strain on agency finances on top of the 1993 deficit, according to an UNRWA press release issued Friday.

Referring to the resumption of Mideast peace talks in Washington, the commissioner-general spoke of "a revival of hope," but said "in stark contrast to this development, we see in the occupied territory that the economic, social and security situation is worse than ever."

Two donors were reported to have announced special in-kind contributions: Spain pledged food aid to the value of some 40 million pesetas (\$342,000) and Denmark pledged a contribution in the form of equipment for the Gaza Hospital valued at some 40

million crowns (\$6.5 million). Italy announced an increase of two billion lira (\$1.33 million) over its 1992 regular contribution, the press release said.

According to the press statement, several donor governments announced additional contributions which will help address the agency deficit. Japan increased its contribution to the agency's 1993 regular budget by \$1 million. Prior to the meeting, Canada had announced an extra 500,000 Canadian dollars (\$413,000) to the Extraordinary Measures for Lebanon and the Occupied Territory (EMLOT) and Turkey made an additional pledge of \$20,000.

Director of the Palestinian Affairs Department at the Foreign Ministry Adel Irshaid, who attended the Vienna meetings, voiced at their conclusion Jordan's refusal of any reduction.

Mr. Irshaid said UNRWA can find the means to meet the deficit in its budget without reducing services "which would only account for one per cent of the expected deficit."

He also said that Jordan opposes stopping appointments in UNRWA's operations areas because the bulk of the agency's employees are Palestinian refugees, and providing jobs for them is one of UNRWA's main duties.

European film festival opens in Amman Sunday

AMMAN (J.T.) — Amman's annual European film festival Sunday at the Royal Cultural Centre.

A special feature this year will be double screenings of the films: each film will be shown at 8:00 p.m. one evening and again at 5:00 p.m. the following day.

This year's programme of seven feature films is expected to give a flavour of the cultural diversity of Europe, while crossing, literally and figuratively, many borders.

The festival opens with a Belgian-Italian-U.S. joint production, "Wait Until Spring, Bandini," which explore the immigrant experience in 1930s America.

From the Netherlands there is "The Vanishing," a tale of mys-

tery as a young Dutch couple travel south through France for their holidays.

The Italian contribution crosses borders of time and space to Russia for Chekov's classic "The Cherry Orchard," while the British film stays at home and tackles the ultimate border with a whimsical ghost story, "Truly, Madly, Deeply."

The three remaining films stay explore universal social themes, Spain with a film version of the Lorca classic "The House of Bernarda Alba," the French "La Discrete" is a story of love spurned and avenged, while Germany's "Wir Konnen Auch Anders" follows the adventures of two young men in pursuit of their inheritance and a new life.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

★ Exhibition of photographs from Jordan by Arslan Ramadan at the Circassian Society, 7th Circle.

★ Close-up photograph exhibition entitled "Intimate Petra" by Paula Williams-Brown and original embossed, hand-painted prints by Rima Farah at the Gallery, Inter-Continental Hotel.

★ Art exhibition entitled "The Legend of Petra II" by artist Suha Shoman at the National Gallery for Fine Arts.

★ Art exhibition by Jordanian artist Ahmad Nawash at the French Cultural Centre.

★ Art exhibition by Syrian Artist Youssef Abdelke at Al Balka'a Gallery, Al Fukeis city.

★ Art exhibition entitled "Fragments: Weavings

and Works on Paper" by Kevin A. Hinch and Margaret M. Hinch at the American Centre.

★ Exhibition of paintings by Suha Katibah Noursi at the Spanish Cultural.

★ Exhibition of contemporary Japanese posters at the Royal Cultural Centre.

★ Exhibition of posters at the Goethe Institut.

★ Exhibition of photographs at the British Council.

LECTURES

★ Lecture entitled "The Map of Jabel Amud in the Southern Jordan Desert" by Prof. Edoardo Borzatti Von Lowenstern of the University of France at 7 p.m. at the Royal Cultural Centre.

★ Lecture, in Arabic, entitled "American Intelligence Activity in the Arab World" by Retired Brigadier-General Mohammad Noor Shihadeh at the Scientific and Cultural Centre of Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation — 6:30 p.m.

MAP الخريطة الأردنية للمعزل الطبي للفلسطينيين

الجائزة الكبرى

الطبعة الأولى 1993

Ticket JD 5

Four days separate us from the drawing of lots

The grand prize and other prizes will be handed to the winners on the day of the march, May 14, 1993, at Nazek Al Hariri Centre

FORUM FURNITURE

★ Other prizes
★ Drawing the lots will take place May 12, 1993 and results will be announced in the local press
★ For information please call tel. 611065

AMMAN:

1. Safeway
2. Al Rainbow Star - 1st Circle
3. George Sahliyah Electric Shop - Jabal Amman - Mutran Street
4. The Flowers Club - Jabal Amman - Astra building
5. Flowers Club - Al Fareed Complex - Al Abdali
6. Burqan for handicrafts - 2nd Circle
7. Bonta Restaurant - Second Circle
8. Firas Bookshop - 3rd Circle
9. Fayez Beauty Shop - Umm Uthaina - near San Rock Hotel
10. Sweet Supermarket - Umm Uthaina
11. Kishke Jewellery - Umm Uthaina
12. Antoine Beauty Shop - 5th Circle
13. Al Khoulfi Pharmacy - 6th Circle
14. Rwanid Pharmacy - Wadi Saqra
15. Firas Pharmacy - Jabal Al Hussein
16. The Interior Circle Pharmacy - Jabal Al Hussein

TICKETS ARE SOLD AT

17. Al Hussein Camp Pharmacy - Jabal Al Hussein
18. Malak Pharmacy - Al Whdat
19. Al Whdat Pharmacy - the Club Street - Al Whdat
20. Abu Sharif Pharmacy - Al Ashrafiyah
21. Milano Pharmacy - Gardens Street
22. Basma pharmacy - Gardens Street
23. Al Alia Pharmacy - Gardens Street
24. Sakhaa Pharmacy - Gardens Street
25. Al Makiabeh Bookshop - Gardens Street
26. University Bookshop - Gardens Street
27. Jamal Pharmacy - Al Jubeiha
28. Al Abdali Pharmacy - Al Abdali
29. Al shadfan Pharmacy - the Sports City
30. The Great Arab Pharmacy - King Faisal Street
31. Babish - Shmeisani
32. Rajaa Pharmacy - Shmeisani
33. The Jordan Clothing Company (CJC) - the Housing

34. The Jordan Clothing Company (CJC) - Al Salt Street
 35. The Jordan Clothing Company (CJC) - Sweitah
 36. Ghassan Jewellery - Tawila Khum - Al Swafiyah
 37. Eastern Tours Co. - Jabal Luwaidah
 38. The University Bookshop - Jabal Luwaidah
 39. The Jordanian International Establishment for Commercial Services - Seventh Circle
 40. The Power Hut - Shmeisani
- ZARQA:**
The Modern Zarqa Pharmacy
- IRBID:**
1. Al Saadoun Pharmacy
2. Al Shugan Pharmacy - Yarmouk University Street
3. Al Hartham Pharmacy - Irbid Refugee Camp
- AQABA:**
Aqaba Pharmacy

OTHER PRIZES:

1. Second prize: DAEWOO televisions set, coloured, 29 inches, presented by the South Electronics Establishment.
2. Third prize: OKI OF-7 facsimile machine, presented by the Modern Arab Establishment for Business.
3. Fourth prize: Amman-Toronto-Amman air ticket, presented by the Royal Jordanian.
4. Fifth prize: Amman-Frankfurt-Amman air ticket, presented by the Royal Jordanian.
5. Sixth prize: Samsung television set, 14 inches, presented by Ahmad Issa Murad Company.
6. Seventh prize: Samsung television

- set, 14 inches, presented by Ahmad Issa Murad Company.
 7. Eighth prize: Goldstar television set, 14 inches, presented by Darwish Al Khalili Company.
 8. Ninth prize: Goldstar television set, 14 inches, presented by Darwish Al Khalili Company.
 9. Tenth prize: Amman-Roma-Amman air ticket, presented by the Royal Jordanian.
 10. Eleventh prize: Amman-Greece-Amman air ticket presented by the Royal Jordanian.
 11. Twelfth prize: Sony stereo set, presented by Sony Company
- In addition to other consolation prizes

Jordan Times

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MOHAMMAD AL KAYED

Editor General:
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Editor-in-Chief:
GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:
Jordan Press Foundation,
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Flights above talks

THE PALESTINIAN decision to suspend the meetings of the joint Israeli-Palestinian human rights committee needs to be seen in proper perspective in order to understand its real significance. Just as the Israeli government and its negotiating teams have to reckon with their constituencies back home and win their support in the pursuit of peace, the Palestinians are likewise accountable to their people and must earn and win their support for the same purpose, otherwise their legitimacy becomes eroded.

As for the resumption of the ninth round of bilateral negotiations, many contacts were made between the Arab parties and Israel through the PLO for the purpose of convincing the Arabs, especially the Palestinians, that outstanding Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights must be rectified as a matter of high urgency.

It was a caveat on which the Palestinian people pressed for the resumption of the talks. It became clear, by the end of the second week of the ninth round, however, that Israel continued to dig its feet on implicit promises for dramatic improvements of the human rights situation in the occupied territories. Against this backdrop, the credibility of the Palestinian negotiating teams has become suspect in the eyes of their people had they conducted their peace talks on a "business as usual" basis.

One must believe that the Israeli government has to deliver on its pledge to address the human rights situation of the Palestinians, especially vis-a-vis the excessive use of force against them, and at the same time move the issue of the 400 Palestinian detainees whose large and powerful constituency remains disgruntled by the recent developments. The Palestinian representatives are justified in their desire to drive home the message that they are not about to sell out to the Israelis on either side of the fence, particularly on the one that promises improved human rights conditions in the occupied territories. Hence the decision to act decisively and boldly in calling off the deliberate abuse of the Palestinian-Israeli human rights committee.

With the Israeli repressive policies in the West Bank and Gaza Strip continuing to take a heavy toll on the lives and well-being of the Palestinian people, the Palestinian negotiating teams must be pressed to justify their continued participation in a forum ostensibly established to improve human rights in these territories. There is but one way for peace talks to go, in order to succeed, and that is to have Israel respect its human rights obligations under both the 4th Geneva Convention and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

EXTENSION by the Arab countries' delegations to the peace talks to extend for a third week their stay in Washington reflects a willingness on exhausting every possible effort at the peace talks in order to reach a just settlement, said Al-Dustour Arabic newspaper. Despite the optimism which some delegates have been expressing at the outset of the ninth session, nothing so far has been achieved, but there is still hope that the parties can achieve the continuation of the talks, the paper added. The paper argued that unless the third week brings with it something to justify the optimism, the whole process could backfire and give way to further frustration that would lead to more tension. Needless to say that harmony and solidarity between the Arab parties are needed to help the Arabs deal with the ongoing stages of the talks because Israel has been betting on the Arabs and achieving its own ends through that tactic.

The paper, it said, that the Arab masses continue to follow the news of the talks, hoping to get a glimpse of some progress, and the Arab parties are bound to pursue towards achieving that end. The paper said that the U.S. administration ought to step in this third week in order to give impetus and to show seriousness in playing the role of full partner as promised.

A COLUMNIST in Al-Dustour daily demanded that the government introduce some changes or amendments in the election law which has become obsolete and does not satisfy the requirements of democracy and does not satisfy the needs of the population. Saleh Qallab said that it is, for all practical purposes, unreasonable to see that a city like Zarqa, with three of a million inhabitants, represented in Parliament by a small number of deputies who represent a sparsely populated region with several thousand inhabitants. The writer is not advocating the idea of one man one vote to deal with the problem, but he wants some amendments that would make the election law more acceptable and fair. He said that it is the Muslim Brotherhood party and the Islamic Action Front that helped them make major gains in the past elections. He urged the government to approach the government with constructive proposals to deal with the situation.

THE WEEK IN PRINT

Ninth round of talks proves sterile so far

Reviewed by Elia Nasrallah



The local media last week gave prominence to the ongoing peace process in Washington, the return of the deported Palestinians and a host of domestic issues, mainly focusing on the election law.

Sawt Al-Shaab daily said that the Arab parties have not yet found any sign of the role of full partner the U.S. administration promised and pledged and therefore nothing was achieved by the end of the second week of talks. Furthermore, it seems that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin is under continued pressure from the opposition parties in Israel not to give any concessions, hence no progress has been achieved.

This view was echoed by Ibrahim Al-Abssi, a columnist in Al-Rai daily, who said that though the Palestinians expressed delight over Israel's decision to allow 30 Palestinians to return home after years of exile, they feel that Israel has not kept its promises to offer concessions at the peace talks in Washington or to create an atmosphere conducive to achieving progress. The writer said what Israel is offering the Arabs in the current session is merely the old plan of autonomous rule for the Palestinians with no promise of any withdrawals from lands occupied since 1967.

One can not understand Palestinian statements that progress has been achieved in the present session, at a time when one can see no real progress on the ground, said Salameh Ekour, a columnist in Sawt Al-Shaab.

Against the Palestinian officials' statement one can see that Israel is escalating its repressive policies and openly disregarding U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338 which provide for creating an atmosphere for real settlement, said the writer. One should remember, he said, that the whole peace process was essentially based on the implementation of these resolutions that cater to the bordering of land for peace.

Tareq Masarweh, a columnist in Al-Rai daily, said that the Palestinians came under criticism for their agreement to go to the peace talks this time in view of the lack of progress in the previous sessions and because Israel has escalated its repression on the Palestinian population.

But, the writer said, everyone in the Arab World realizes that it is not for Arafat or the other Palestinian leaders to decide, because the whole Arab World was under pressure from the United States to resume the talks with the Israelis.

He said that the Arab countries themselves did nothing to help the Palestinians regain their rights and the whole world community has failed to come to the help of the Palestinians, by ending Israel's repression or repatriating the exiles.

He said the Palestinians took the current decision to give the Israelis one more chance to

meet them on the way of attaining peace.

Urging the U.S. administration to take some action towards establishing right and justice, a columnist in Al-Rai daily said that as long as Washington realizes that Israel has been occupying Arab land since 1967 and recognises U.N. Resolution 242, it is morally bound to do something to bring an end to occupation.

The writer said that the United States should not only play the role of full partner in the ninth session: to help the two sides attain peace, it should also provide material assistance to the Palestinians to make up for their losses during the 25 years of occupation. Hani Saoudi, a columnist in Al-Rai Arabic daily, commented on the return of the Palestinians from Jordan to Palestine by saying that the move delighted all Arabs. Indeed, the eviction of the Palestinians from their homeland and their movement from the west to the east of the River Jordan reflected the Arab Nation's defeat, but the return of these Palestinians, albeit piecemeal, represents a victory for Arab rights, said Saoudi.

In the view of Nicola Naser, a columnist in Al-Rai, the repatriation of 30 Palestinians in the past weeks came as a blessing. But the writer said that the repatriation of the Palestinians upon a purely Israeli decision should be regarded as a failure and not a victory for the Arab negotiators in Washington, and the world community.

The writer said that Israel is picking up only certain elements and certain people among those it had expelled

although thousands of evictees have the right to return. By applying this method, said the writer, Israel is fragmenting and not implementing U.N. resolutions on the Palestinian people.

Current rumours about the imminent decisions by the government to issue temporary laws of the election and sales tax laws were tackled by a number of columnists.

"No to the present election" was the title of an article by Dr. Fahed Al-Fanek in Al-Rai daily in which he outlines the many disadvantages of the present law and advocates meaningful amendments.

The 1986 election law is a farce since it allows people to reach Parliament in an unfair manner and deprives many others of this right, he said. He said that in certain constituencies a citizen has the right to vote for six people, but one is allowed to be voted for in other constituencies under the terms of the present law, said Fanek. He said there are many loopholes in the current law that should be plugged, or the whole election law replaced.

Salameh Ekour, a columnist in Sawt Al-Shaab, demanded that the government introduce a law on elections that would cater to the higher national

interests, disregarding the selfish interests of certain political parties or deputies who see the present law as a means for reaching Parliament again.

He also said that political parties should see that the higher national interest overrides the interests of certain groups.

In the view of Abdullah Al-Khatib, a columnist in Al-Dustour, the present election law is unfair because of the distribution of the constituencies and the number of deputies to be elected in each of them.

Dr. Khatib said that if the coming elections were held under the same law, one

should not expect any change from the previous elections which did not satisfy the majority of the Jordanian people.

Under the title of "Change of the election law is inevitable," Mohammad Daoud, a columnist in Al-Dustour, said that there is a general tendency to have the present law changed in order to see fair elections in November.

The writer said that many developments occurred in the political scene in Jordan justifying this change and also that it is unreasonable to see some people voting for seven candidates in one constituency while other citizens are only allowed to vote for two or three.

Salameh Ekour, a columnist in Sawt Al-Shaab, described a decision by Fateh, the main group in the PLO, to allow Palestinians in the camps to take part in the coming elections as a dangerous move. He said that during the previous election the PLO refrained from supporting any of the candidates and the decision was right and wise. But he said that Fateh, which has a wide popular base, could be affecting the trend of the coming elections in Jordan with detrimental consequences to the Jordanian candidates.

A columnist in Al-Dustour drew attention to the fact that the community colleges in Jordan now number more than 50, but none of them helps end unemployment and if anything, they tend to aggravate the situation. Saleh Qallab said that the diplomas these community colleges award to their graduates do not help them find jobs and 60 per cent of the graduates have been waiting for clerical jobs for the past eight years. He said community colleges should be transformed into vocational centres, providing courses that would help the graduates find jobs in the local market and abroad.

LETTERS

Degrees of fairness

To the Editor:

AFTER the Lockerbie tragedy, when a Boeing 747 (Flight No. 103/PA), a Pan Am jet, crashed in Scotland and 280 Americans lost their lives, America is calling not only for the two Libyans allegedly implicated in that disaster to be put on trial in America or Scotland, but also is demanding compensation for the families who lost relatives in that disaster.

It is no secret that the state of Israel has been funded for the past 45 years by America, both at government level and by the Jewish lobby. There is also the question of arms supplied to Israel, from the same source, evidence of which I have seen with my own eyes.

In view of the support, financial and with arms, to Israel, it would not be difficult to establish in any court of law that America has been complicit in the killing of thousands of Palestinian and Lebanese innocent men, women and children. No one ever mentioned compensation for the victims of Israeli aggression.

Why then, the world is entitled to ask, is a premium put on the lives of the 280 Americans who lost their lives in the Lockerbie disaster?

Are we now being told, by implication, that American lives are more important and of greater value than those of the Palestinian or the Lebanese?

God help us if we are now being told there are varying values of human life. As a humanitarian, I find the suggestion quite repugnant.

Strange, with 24,700 murders in the U.S. last year, it appeared to me that American lives were so cheap!

When the Libyan leader, Muammar Qadhafi, claims that the two Libyans allegedly involved in the Lockerbie tragedy would not get a fair trial in either Britain or America, he is right because they have already been found guilty by the media in both countries.

I hope the United Nations Security Council will support his suggestion that they should be tried in a neutral country, before five judges appointed by the United Nations, and I hope the non-aligned nations will find that an acceptable solution.

Reg Cleaver,
9 Elm View,
Ash Hill,
Aldershot, Hants,
U.K.

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Delegation spokespersons report forward movement in ninth round

Following is a summary of the briefings made by the Palestinian and Israeli spokespersons attending the ninth round of peace talks in Washington, on May 5, 1993.

Special from Washington

Palestinian briefing

In her second press briefing of the ninth round of peace talks, Palestinian spokeswoman Dr. Hanan Ashrawi sought to underline the importance and difficulty of the current phase of negotiations. Dr. Ashrawi stressed the need for Israel to back its statements by making tangible improvements with regards to the human rights situation in the occupied territories. Now that the two sides are getting into the core matters, Ashrawi said, they are finding that there are serious gaps that need to be overcome.

Of the second week of negotiations, Dr. Ashrawi said that the talks continue to be serious with substantive and business-like discussions. She pointed out, though, that it will be difficult to report to the media on a daily basis now that they are dealing with the core issues and the details pertaining to them. "The issues on the table are central issues and form the core of the substance, so it will be very difficult to assess the basics of disagreement and the various process to untangle the differences," she said.

Dr. Ashrawi stressed that there is a "difference in attitude" in this round and although there may be more progress in discussions on some of the issues and less on another, "the fact that we are discussing those issues is significant," she said. As an example, the Palestinian spokeswoman said that the discussions on territorial integrity were important and dealing with land as a whole is a very important issue. Asked if the Israelis have presented anything new to the Palestinians on the functional as opposed to the conceptual level, Dr. Ashrawi repeated that it is important that there is a discussion of territorial integrity, even if functionally there are differences between the two sides. "If we agreed functionally, there would be no need to negotiate. At least now there is a willingness to discuss issues that were previously taboo," she said.

Dr. Ashrawi called on the Israelis to follow up on the promises they made last week for the

return of more Palestinian expellees. She said that the Israeli attitude is judged by actions on the ground and not just by their statements or by cosmetic changes. Referring to Israel's agreement to return thirty Palestinian expellees, Dr. Ashrawi said that if these initial steps are to have any validity, then Israel needs to "sustain the atmosphere" and take concrete steps to improve the human rights situation in the occupied territories. This would include speeding the return of the Palestinian expellees in Marj el Zohour, releasing of prisoners and ending the state of siege in the occupied territories and especially in Jerusalem. The human context in which the talks are being held is primary and this remains the major setback to real progress Dr. Ashrawi explained.

Concerning the working group on land, Dr. Ashrawi said that they are discussing the issues of substance which include registration, administration, categorization, zoning, planning and special sites. The focus of the Palestinian presentation was on the terms of reference, jurisdiction, transfer of powers and responsibilities to the organs of the Palestinian interim self-government in an institutional way, and the availability of relevant maps and data. Dr. Ashrawi said that in the discussions, the Palestinians are probing to see how they can translate into functional steps the need to have land be treated as an integral whole.

Concerning the discussions on water, Dr. Ashrawi said that both sides made their presentations with the Palestinians presenting issues for discussion which the Israelis have so far refused to discuss. The issues that the Palestinians would like to discuss in this working group are: water rights and Israel's denial of these rights, the maldistribution of water, the profligate use of water by Jewish settlers, institutional control and access to information, as well as the fact that the Palestinians have no control over their water. The Israeli presentation focused on resource management and use, as well as the data base. Asked to define what she meant by "water rights," Dr. Ashrawi said that the Palestinian presentation concentrated on the issue of water rights because Israel always refuses to talk about it. "They always talk about water manage-

ment," she said.

The Palestinian spokeswoman said the working group on the ISGA concept continued discussions on the terms of reference, the goals and objectives of the peace process, the linkage between the interim phase and the permanent status, "permanent status being the full implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338," and that anything interim must not be prejudicial to this implementation. Dr. Ashrawi said that there was also extensive discussion on legislation and on elections. The Israeli presentation focused on "areas of technique of legislation" and the "process of mutual confirmation." Dr. Ashrawi did not wish to explain what is meant by the term "mutual confirmation." The Palestinian presentation continues to deal with the issue of primary as well as secondary legislation which she explained, "must be dealt with as a whole and not fragmented into spheres or subjected to Israeli veto." In terms of elections, the discussions were on holding them under international supervision, as well as on eligibility for the running and voting in them.

Asked if the Palestinians would like to have the Americans "sit at the table" with them, Dr. Ashrawi said that the U.S. role has seen some development. They are taking seriously the Palestinian demands and following up on them, she said, but there has been no formal request yet made to the Americans to sit at the negotiating table. For now, Dr. Ashrawi said, the Palestinians would like more evenhanded involvement from the Americans. She concluded her answer by saying that at a certain point there may be a need for American mediation and "the only way they can effectively do that is in the negotiating room."

With regard to the suggestion by Dr. Nabil Shaath that a declaration of principle could possibly be reached next week, Dr. Ashrawi explained that the issue of the declaration of principles was raised and each side presented their views on it. The declaration would serve as a political framework and as such requires agreement on the broad and basic issues since it will be seriously considered as a way to organize the work, she said. The Palestinian spokeswoman did not

want to say whether or not she thinks a declaration of principles will be made next week.

Israeli briefing

ISRAELI Spokesman Yossi Gal Thursday termed as "bizarre" the Palestinian decision to suspend meetings in the working group on human rights and announced that an understanding was reached between the Jordanian and Israeli sides establishing three formal working groups to discuss "the whole range of issues" on the agenda. He identified the three working groups by name (one group deals with the issues of water, energy, and environment; the second group will discuss all issues related to security, borders and the elements of peace; and the third group deals with refugees, economic issues and bilateral cooperation). "We welcome this decision. We think that it is a step forward in that track," he said in reference to the meetings of these groups which he said started Wednesday.

Mr. Gal termed negotiations with the Jordanians as "positive in spirit and approach" and said that the two sides agreed upon the working mechanism for proceeding with the negotiations on that track. Asked during the question-and-answer session whether diplomatic and economic relations and the exchange of ambassadors were being discussed with the Jordanian delegation, Mr. Gal pointed to one of the groups that was established on that track — dealing with issues of security, borders and the elements of peace. "These are certainly elements of peace, and we have agreed with the Jordanians that this peace process should culminate in a peace treaty. And the exchange of ambassadors is certainly an ingredient of peace in our opinion," he said.

In his opening statement, Mr. Gal welcomed the Arab decision to extend the talks for another week, saying that the Middle East peace process seems to have entered into a different phase — "different in character, content and hopefully, continuity." Mr. Gal said the Israeli side will continue to press for continuous, uninterrupted negotiations because "experience has shown that when we do not move forward, we move backwards."

The Israeli spokesman said there seems to be a readiness on

both the Israeli and Palestinian sides to enter into discussion on substantive issues. Israel, he said, has taken a number of steps in allowing the return of the 30 deportees, family reunification and other measures in order to facilitate the talks and create a better atmosphere. He repeated the Israeli proposal to Palestinian negotiators on early empowerment of authorities before the completion of interim self-government (ISGA) negotiations. Likewise, he said, the Israelis offered the Palestinians to negotiate the establishment of a police force so that that police force is in place when negotiations over self-government are concluded.

He restated developments that have taken place in the negotiating room thus far: the two sides agreed to establish working groups dealing with (1) the concept of ISGA; (2) land and water issues; (3) a committee on human rights. The two sides also engaged in a mutual effort to arrive at a joint statement of principles in order to provide a framework for their negotiations, he said. In Thursday's session, he noted, the Israelis introduced a draft proposal for an agreed statement of principles. He agreed with Palestinian spokeswoman Hanan Ashrawi that it is difficult to assess the talks on a daily basis. "On the one hand, the talks between Israel and the Palestinians now are dealing with the core issues of substance. We are discussing the essence of self-government, structure, legislation, elections, land, water, and other questions that are at the heart of negotiations. On the other hand, though, we should not expect dramatic breakthroughs in these negotiations," he warned.

In what he termed a "bizarre move" that took the Israelis by surprise, Mr. Gal said the Palestinians announced last night the suspension of the working group on human rights. "This group, it will be remembered, was established at their request in order to deal with the humanitarian issues which they themselves raised and which directly affects (sic) the lives of Palestinians in the territories," he said, "one cannot describe the centrality of human rights issues and then at the same time decide to interrupt our work on these matters which have been termed by them as issues of the

utmost importance... We hope that this decision of theirs will be taken back," he added.

Regarding the Syrian-Israeli track, Mr. Gal said there was "no news" about the questions the Israelis have posed to their Syrian counterparts. "We need to know what kind of peace Syria has in mind before we are in a position to elaborate on the question of withdrawal," he said.

With the Lebanese delegation, Mr. Gal said, the talks continue in a positive spirit and good atmosphere. The proposal submitted to the Lebanese on Tuesday represents a political council for dealing with the outstanding security issues between the two sides.

Mr. Gal was asked about the conflicting statements coming out of Israel with regards to Palestinians, a confederation with Jordan being one school of thought. Mr. Gal said these negotiations are not discussing final status issues. "We are only talking about self-government here. The idea (behind Madrid) also calls for leaving all the options for the final status open," he insisted.

Asked to elaborate on developments on Israel's proposal for early empowerment, Mr. Gal said the Israelis have not until now heard any response from their Palestinian colleagues.

With respect to the Israeli answer to the review of Hamas expellees expected next Wednesday — a delay which caused the suspension of the meetings on the human rights committee — Mr. Gal said the Palestinian announcement to suspend the meetings has put the "precondition" that they will not resume the talks on that committee before the review is completed. "We don't really think that any side should put any preconditions to the others. There is a review going on, and when this review is completed it will be presented," he insisted.

Important work is being done, and even today we continued in the two other delegations, and even... presented a paper for their consideration, and there's an exchange of ideas on that statement of principles."

Mr. Gal was asked whether what he termed as a "new phase of negotiations" means that the two sides are at a point of agreement or that they are simply deliberating in a more businesslike manner without reaching any agreement on the points of friction. In reply, Mr. Gal said no one should expect anything dramatic to take place in these negotiations. "These negotiations are different in that our Palestinian colleagues have finally agreed to enter into formal negotiating groups. And in each and every one of these negotiating groups... we have started touching on issues of substance," he said.

Asked what purpose the declaration of principles with the Palestinians would serve, Mr. Gal explained that at the beginning of the negotiations, the Israelis presented their Palestinian counterparts with a whole list of options on how to proceed in the negotiations. "A declaration of principle, if we manage to achieve it, will be a document that really outlines the basic agreements that we will hopefully reach on that self-government. So it will be a basis for the continuation of negotiations," he said, although he denied that it would constitute a prerequisite for the continuation of the talks.

The Israeli spokesman refused to go into the details of the declaration of principles. He would only say that the draft proposal submitted to the Palestinians Thursday came after three days of exchanges of views on the declaration during which the two sides touched on "formulations of certain items." The Palestinians are expected to come back after the weekend either with their proposal or with comments on the Israeli proposal "so that we can carry these attempts to reach a joint statement of principles to fruition," he said.

Mr. Gal denied there is a deadlock on the Syrian-Israeli track and said that the two sides are in the midst of a serious attempt at reaching the statement of principles. He noted that Israel's comments on the Syrian formula of full Palestinian withdrawal is

that while full withdrawal is a well-defined term, full peace is not.

Mr. Gal said he does not know if a date for a meeting of the heads of delegations with President Bill Clinton has been fixed.

Israeli negotiators' briefing

On Wednesday, May 5, 1993, the Israeli delegation held a press briefing for the Arab media. In the on-the-record part of the briefing, Israel's chief negotiator with the Syrian delegation, Itamar Rabinovich, took questions without presenting a prepared statement. Uri Lubrani, chief Israeli negotiator on the Israeli-Lebanese track, discussed in an off-the-record session a new Israeli proposal presented to the Lebanese delegation Tuesday.

Mr. Rabinovich was asked whether the lack of progress on the Israeli-Syrian track was a result of the reluctance of both parties to commit themselves to concrete statements about "what kind of peace" and "what kind of withdrawal" the two parties are willing to offer each other. "Rabinovich said that it was true that the two sides are still talking about the same issues but he did not agree that there has not been any deadlock."

He explained that for part of last week the two sides had been going over paragraphs one to four of the Israeli-Syrian text for a second reading — paragraphs which had been written in September and October of last year. "That made him realize 'how much distance has been covered' since the beginning of the negotiations. For the last two days, he said, the two delegations tried to redraft the preamble of paragraph five which embodies the concept both parties have of the negotiations. In his opinion, the two sides have made "very substantial progress" so far. He added that it was not unusual for negotiations to go through periods of ups and downs.

On the issue of whether the Israelis are willing to be more specific on their idea of withdrawal from the Golan Heights, Mr. Rabinovich said that for Israel to do that, it needs to understand the kind of peace Syria is willing to offer. He added that so far Syrian chief negotiator Muaffaq Allaf was "not able to" tell the Israelis whether "full peace" includes diplomatic relations between the two countries or not.

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Economy

Kuwait seen wary of IMF wage cut call

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait, trying to reduce a budget deficit swollen by Gulf war costs, may start charging more for some public services but will not cut civil service wages, officials are reported as saying.

The small Gulf state, whose per capita income is one of the highest in the world, has proposed a 10 per cent cut in spending in fiscal year 1993/94 from July 1.

Kuwait is also considering ways of boosting non-oil revenue, but officials have reacted cautiously to an International Monetary Fund (IMF) recommendation for further belt-tightening in the form of cuts in civil service salaries, one of its biggest expenses.

"The study and the recommendations referred by the IMF to the government are not binding and cutting salaries of government employees is against the law," newspapers quoted Finance Minister Nasser Abdullah Al

Rodhan as saying recently. "That plans are adopted by other countries for solving problems similar to Kuwait's does not necessarily mean we should adopt such plans. But that should not stop us from seeing others' experiments."

Wages accounted for 27 per cent of state spending in 1988/1989, the last full year for which official figures are available. Oil accounted for 57 per cent of revenue. Tax and services revenue accounted for a total 12 per cent.

Sheikh Rodhan added in answer to a parliamentary question: "We are trying to improve our non-oil revenues, and to do this we are studying the possibility of increasing the normal fees for public services."

Kuwait's overseas assets, once valued at up to \$100 billion, have been sapped by costs related to the 1991 conflict in which the

China's oil thirst may fuel Mideast arms sales

SINGAPORE (R) — China is guzzling down more and more imported oil and may start paying for it by supplying arms to oil producers in the Middle East.

Chinese energy demand is exploding so fast that it will have little choice but to turn to big Mideast oil producers for supplies later this decade, a leading oil analyst said.

Mideast oil producers sold only about 70,000 barrels of oil a day to China last year but sales will leap to between 600,000 and 1.5 million barrels a day by the end of the decade, Ferrelund Fesheraki, head of resource programmes at Hawaii's East-West Centre, said at an oil conference here.

That would make China one of the world's biggest buyers of Mideast crude at the turn of the century.

"There is going to be a desire in China to import oil from the Mideast and supply the Mideast with nuclear power, sophisticated technology and arms," Mr. Fesheraki said.

Such trade "seems plausible", one Western diplomat said. "China is interested in selling weapons and the Middle East is one of the biggest markets. I don't know where else they would get all the money (to pay for high oil prices)."

An increasing pattern of arms for oil is certain to raise hackles in the United States, which has repeatedly accused China of exporting arms and technology to

Iran, Iraq, Libya, Syria and other countries in the Middle East, analysts said.

"There will be friction with the U.S. but I don't think China has any choice," Mr. Fesheraki said. He expects China will become a net importer of crude oil by March 1994, several years earlier than previously expected.

China's gross domestic product grew by 12.8 per cent in 1992 and Chinese economists predict 13 per cent growth this year, more than half again as much as official forecasts.

The new chief of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency said recently the agency is worried that China could supply arms to countries unable to get weapons from Western nations with tougher export controls.

A bill before the U.S. Congress lays down conditions Peking must meet if Washington is to retain preferential tariffs for trade with China. The conditions include guidelines for the transfer of missiles and chemical and biological weapons.

One Western diplomat said China would be playing with fire by pumping weapons into the Middle East. "It is a dangerous area for them internationally and especially in regards to relations with the U.S."

The exact extent of any American reaction is likely to be determined by just what China sells and to whom, analysts said, with sales of weapons to U.S. allies

Financial Markets

In co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank

| Currency | New York Close 5/5/93 | Tokyo Close 6/5/93 |
|------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Sterling Pound* | 1.5660 | 1.5660 |
| Deutsche Mark | 1.5745 | 1.5792 |
| Swiss Franc | 1.1170 | 1.1185 |
| French Franc | 5.3240 | 5.3305** |
| Japanese Yen | 110.35 | 110.19 |
| European Currency Unit | 1.2370 | 1.2366** |

* USD Per STD
** European Opening @ 10:00 a.m. GMT

| Currency | 1 MTH | 3 MTHS | 6 MTHS | 12 MTHS |
|------------------------|-------|--------|--------|---------|
| U.S. Dollar* | 3.06 | 3.06 | 3.12 | 3.37 |
| Sterling Pound | 5.88 | 6.06 | 6.12 | 6.19 |
| Deutsche Mark | 7.68 | 7.43 | 7.12 | 6.62 |
| Swiss Franc | 4.93 | 4.81 | 4.62 | 4.37 |
| French Franc | 7.50 | 7.25 | 7.06 | 6.75 |
| Japanese Yen | 3.18 | 3.18 | 3.25 | 3.28 |
| European Currency Unit | 8.25 | 8.06 | 7.87 | 7.50 |

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Precious Metals

Dates: 6/5/1993

| Metal | USD/Oz | JD/Gm* | Metal | USD/Oz | JD/Gm* |
|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Gold | 354.75 | 6.75 | Silver | 4.30 | 0.095 |

* 1 Karat

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin Dates: 6/5/1993

| Currency | Bid | Offer |
|----------------|---------|---------|
| U.S. Dollar | 0.6820 | 0.6840 |
| Sterling Pound | 1.0676 | 1.0729 |
| Deutsche Mark | 0.4313 | 0.4335 |
| Swiss Franc | 0.4602 | 0.4626 |
| French Franc | 0.1260 | 0.1286 |
| Japanese Yen* | 0.0178 | 0.0209 |
| Dutch Guilder | 0.3840 | 0.3859 |
| Swedish Krona | 0.0933 | 0.0958 |
| Italian Lira* | 0.0465 | 0.0467 |
| Belgian Franc | 0.02098 | 0.02108 |

* Per 100

| Currency | Bid | Offer |
|----------------|----------|----------|
| Bahraini Dinar | 1.7900 | 1.8300 |
| Lebanese Lira* | 0.038425 | 0.040625 |
| Saudi Riyal | 0.1815 | 0.1830 |
| Kuwaiti Dinar | 2.2250 | 2.2750 |
| Qatari Riyal | 0.1845 | 0.1865 |
| Egyptian Pound | 0.1950 | 0.2100 |
| Omani Riyal | 1.7390 | 1.7700 |
| UAE Dirham | 0.1845 | 0.1865 |
| Greek Drachma* | 0.31575 | 0.34575 |
| Cypriot Pound | 1.4390 | 1.4690 |

* Per 100

| Index | 4/5/1993 | Close | 5/5/1993 | Close |
|------------------|----------|-------|----------|-------|
| All-Share | 199.86 | | 199.24 | |
| Banking Sector | 138.22 | | 137.66 | |
| Insurance Sector | 212.20 | | 212.04 | |
| Industry Sector | 285.68 | | 284.95 | |
| Services Sector | 266.56 | | 265.64 | |

* December 31, 1990 = 100

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

| U.S. \$1.00 costs | Canadian dollar |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1.2690/95 | 1.5755/65 |
| 1.7670/80 | 1.4175/85 |
| 32.37/39 | 5.3015/65 |
| 5.3015/65 | 1448/1451 |
| 110.10/15 | 7.2475/575 |
| 6.6480/580 | 6.0550/650 |
| \$1.5770/80 | \$357.60/\$358.10 |

One sterling
One ounce of gold

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET

HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - JORDAN
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| COMPANY'S NAME | TRADING VOLUME | PREV. CLOSING PRICE | OPENING PRICE | CLOSING PRICE |
|--|----------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------|
| AMMAN BANK | 2,461,668 | 137.500 | 138.000 | 138.500 |
| JORDAN BANK | 43,001 | 4.950 | 4.970 | 4.910 |
| CALSO AMMAN BANK | 1,288 | 25.500 | 25.750 | 25.750 |
| BANK OF JORDAN | 43,916 | 24.900 | 24.900 | 25.000 |
| KIDGAS EAST INVESTMENT BANK | 276,694 | 1.800 | 1.850 | 1.900 |
| INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK | 57,313 | 6.800 | 6.850 | 6.900 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT BANK | 134,549 | 0.820 | 0.810 | 0.820 |
| JORDAN EXHIBIT BANK | 29,892 | 2.410 | 2.400 | 2.400 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT BANK | 12,970 | 1.700 | 1.680 | 1.650 |
| JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK | 29,143 | 4.100 | 4.250 | 4.400 |
| JORDAN BANK FOR SAVING & INVESTMENT | 93,961 | 4.210 | 4.210 | 4.170 |
| BUSINESS BANK | 7,338 | 2.750 | 2.750 | 2.700 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 4,727 | 5.550 | 5.550 | 5.550 |
| BEST ARAB BANKING/INVESTMENT FOR HOUSING | 41,731 | 5.400 | 5.500 | 5.540 |
| JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT | 294,564 | 1.500 | 1.550 | 1.550 |
| AMMAN BANKING CORPORATION/JORDAN | 11,209 | 2.600 | 2.620 | 2.550 |
| PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK | 537,002 | 1.980 | 2.000 | 2.150 |
| JORDAN INTERNATIONAL TRADING CENTER | 6,600 | 3.220 | 3.200 | 3.200 |
| KIDGAS EAST INVESTMENT BANK | 1,684 | 4.000 | 4.000 | 4.000 |
| UNITED INSURANCE | 800 | 4.000 | 4.000 | 4.000 |
| JORDAN INSURANCE | 169,421 | 2.840 | 2.800 | 2.800 |
| JORDAN FRANCHISE INSURANCE | 11,680 | 3.150 | 3.000 | 3.000 |
| ARAB LIFE & ACCIDENT INSURANCE | 48,553 | 2.930 | 2.930 | 2.950 |
| JORDAN GROUP INSURANCE | 13,810 | 2.450 | 2.400 | 2.400 |
| JORDANIAN MARITIME POWER | 119,012 | 2.130 | 2.100 | 2.100 |
| JORDAN ROYAL & TOURISM | 59,637 | 7.470 | 7.450 | 7.470 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 8,307 | 1.320 | 1.280 | 1.250 |
| AMMAN INTERNATIONAL TRADING CENTER | 34,912 | 5.400 | 5.350 | 5.250 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 4,985 | 2.300 | 2.400 | 2.350 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 82,755 | 0.400 | 0.400 | 0.330 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 103,250 | 0.450 | 0.410 | 0.400 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 1,530 | 0.500 | 0.500 | 0.500 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 648,487 | 0.860 | 0.860 | 0.950 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 7,272 | 1.200 | 1.200 | 1.270 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 1,770 | 2.070 | 2.100 | 2.100 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 26,506 | 1.340 | 1.350 | 1.350 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 2,794 | 6.500 | 6.500 | 6.500 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 153,979 | 2.150 | 2.200 | 2.210 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 1,921 | 2.940 | 2.950 | 2.950 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 1,579,925 | 2.890 | 2.940 | 2.900 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 7,254 | 4.440 | 4.470 | 4.500 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 100,227 | 1.510 | 1.510 | 1.510 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 5,737 | 7.700 | 7.700 | 7.700 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 379 | 2.900 | 2.900 | 2.900 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 854,400 | 0.850 | 0.850 | 0.850 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 35,276 | 8.850 | 8.900 | 8.910 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 245,946 | 7.050 | 7.000 | 7.000 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 352,924 | 7.710 | 7.700 | 7.700 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 1,921 | 2.940 | 2.950 | 2.950 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 20,708 | 3.430 | 3.580 | 3.570 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 612 | 2.900 | 2.900 | 3.060 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 32,775 | 21.850 | 21.850 | 21.850 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 294,723 | 2.300 | 2.180 | 2.250 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 20,232 | 0.700 | 0.700 | 0.710 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 589,825 | 14.500 | 14.300 | 14.400 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 216,618 | 3.200 | 3.250 | 3.200 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 21,512 | 13.210 | 13.400 | 13.300 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 12,123 | 0.900 | 0.880 | 0.910 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 36,893 | 2.170 | 2.250 | 2.250 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 49,613 | 2.170 | 2.140 | 2.130 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 26,140 | 0.520 | 0.530 | 0.570 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 383,636 | 6.130 | 6.050 | 6.050 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 56,470 | 0.900 | 0.900 | 0.920 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 173,721 | 4.130 | 4.130 | 4.170 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 17,410 | 5.320 | 5.300 | 5.700 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 83,559 | 2.940 | 2.900 | 2.880 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 235,331 | 13.900 | 9.500 | 9.250 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 16,650 | 4.510 | 4.500 | 4.500 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 12,529 | 1.250 | 1.260 | 1.240 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 6,818 | 0.810 | 0.800 | 0.820 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 1,038 | 4.100 | 4.100 | 4.150 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 1,016,090 | 11.200 | 11.400 | 11.700 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 4,500 | 4.500 | 4.500 | 4.500 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 163,104 | 4.180 | 4.050 | 4.240 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 390,548 | 2.030 | 2.000 | 2.020 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 1,480 | 3.500 | 3.400 | 3.400 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 480,328 | 5.250 | 5.250 | 5.300 |
| GRAND TOTAL | 12,613,026 | | | |

PARALLEL MARKET TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (03/05/1993 - 05/05/1993)

WEEKLY REPORT

| COMPANY'S NAME | TRADING VOLUME | PREV. CLOSING PRICE | OPENING PRICE | CLOSING PRICE |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------|
| CENTRAL GENERAL TRADING & STORAGE | 106,603 | 1.000 | 1.020 | 1.130 |
| ARAB TRADING & INVESTMENT | 206,131 | 2.040 | 2.040 | 2.040 |
| ARAB TRADING FACILITIES | 11,576 | 0.620 | 0.640 | 0.680 |
| JORDANIAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 24,651 | 1.800 | 1.810 | 1.770 |
| AMMAN INVESTMENT | 2,410 | 2.500 | 2.500 | 2.500 |
| GRAND TOTAL | 353,444 | | | |

Austria offers to help Jordanian exporters

AMMAN (J.T.) — A two-day seminar on how export procedures work and what should be done when preparing to market overseas, will take place Saturday and Sunday at the conference hall of the Amman Chamber of Commerce.

The seminar, organized by the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber in cooperation with the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and the Jordan National Committee, will provide special assistance to Jordan's exporting sector.

The head of the Austrian Export Academy, Dr. Hans Bauer, the export marketing specialist Dr. Guenter Langer and two leading Austrian export managers (Dr. Michael Bielowski — textiles and clothing, Mr. Peter Malek — fruits and vegetables) will explain how export procedures work and evaluate what should be done when preparing to market overseas.

This includes all aspects of sales development and market penetration with particular emphasis on dealing with agents and distributors. This course, which will provide basic information on exporting from Jordan to Austria, will be useful for businessmen who require to understand the complete story in moving goods abroad, in particular to Western Europe.

The seminar takes place at a time when a growth in exports is considered of crucial importance for Jordan's economy. Given the relatively small size of the domestic market, foreign trade should become — as in the case of Austria — one of the most important elements of Jordan's economy.

Austria as a traditionally export oriented nation wants to share know-how in this field with Jordan. Austria is ready to serve as test market for Jordanian exporters towards the larger and very competitive markets of Western Europe.

On the other hand Austria has been the centre of East-West business for quite a while. Many Austrian trading companies have acquired a profound knowledge of Eastern European markets which could be of use to Jordanian exporters.

Israel says bank bailout cost \$9.1b

TEL AVIV (R) — The Israeli government's bailout of banks a decade ago has so far cost more than \$9 billion, the state financial watchdog, comptroller Miriam Ben-Porat, has reported.

She said the full cost of a 1983 arrangement, in which the state indirectly bought bank shares after their value collapsed, could not be calculated until the shares were sold.

She said the bank share agreement had cost Israeli \$9.1 billion by the end of October 1991.

"Not one bank controlling interest has been sold... the direct damage to the state treasury... can only be calculated after their (the shares) sale," the report said.

The bank shares, whose value had been manipulated by private bank owners before the 1983 crash, were supposed to have been sold back to the public by next October.

However, in unveiling proposed banking reforms last week the government acknowledged the deadline for selling the shares of Bank Hapoalim, Bank Leumi, Israel Discount Bank and Bank Mizrahi may be missed.

The proposals, which must pass parliament, say independently appointed trustees should manage the shares instead of the state if they are not sold. That would avoid the formal nationalisation that would otherwise take effect.

Ms. Ben-Porat put the blame for delay squarely on the 1983 scheme that created a "completely unacceptable and unreasonable situation."

"On one side, the state guarantees the share prices and takes on the banks' losses from the manipulation... until the date of the sale of the shares. On the other,

the prior owners... continue to run the banks and enjoy the authority of appointing the directors," the report said.

Ms. Ben-Porat said the bankers were involved in the process of selling shares but wanted to regain control, complicating the state's efforts to privatise the banks.

Some issues raised by Mr. Ben-Porat's report were partially addressed in the reforms unveiled last week, which received cabinet approval Sunday.

The reforms would force banks to sell all but 25 per cent of shares in non-banking companies, to sell some smaller banks they own and require a non-banking majority on bank-owned provident fund boards and investment committees.

Critics said the changes do not go far enough but treasury officials called them a compromise between reformers' demands and bankers' opposition to limits.

Michelin to shed 2,950 jobs

CLERMONT-FERRAND, France (AFP) — The Michelin tyre manufacturer plans to shed 2,950 jobs in France by the end of 1994, the company has said.

The company has shed 4,900 jobs under a restructuring plan which was announced in October 1991.

Observers said that the plan was driven by crisis in the car industry which has deepened in recent months.

Michelin, which is the biggest manufacturer of tyres, employs 30,192 people in France.

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Production Department / Amman
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LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at mid-session on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Friday.

| U.S. \$1.00 costs | Canadian dollar |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1.2690/95 | 1.5755/65 |
| 1.7670/80 | 1.4175/85 |
| 32.37/39 | 5.3015/65 |
| 5.3015/65 | 1448/1451 |
| 110.10/15 | 7.2475/575 |
| 6.6480/580 | 6.0550/650 |
| \$1.5770/80 | \$357.60/\$358.10 |

One sterling
One ounce of gold

TODAY AT

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DRACULA

LOVE NEVER DIES

Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 6:00, 8:15, 10:30

PLAZA

Tel.: 699238

Farouq Al Fishawi / Ilham Shahin in

Knights With a Style

Arabic

Shows: 12:15, 3:15, 6:15, 8:30, 10:45

Nabil Al Mashini Theatre

Tel.: 675571

Today the Nabil Mashini Theatre hosts

Al Fawaris Troupe acting

in a play entitled:

Death of Taybeh

By: Suheir Fahd, Mohammad Al Qabbani, Amer Al Khafash

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Welcomes Parliament and Budget

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Welcomes New World Order

On Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays at 9:00 p.m.

Please make advance reservation

Patten urges better U.S. ties with China

NEW YORK (AP) — Governor Chris Patten of Hong Kong appealed to the United States to safeguard the colony's future by developing close ties with China and avoiding punitive trade restrictions.

Mr. Patten spent the week in Washington lobbying President Bill Clinton and congressional leaders to renew China's "most-favoured nation" trade status — which carries the lowest tariffs.

"The best guarantee of Hong Kong's future prosperity, stability and freedom is good, constructive and close relations between China and the United States" — its two largest trading partners, Mr. Patten said.

Some in Congress want to attach human rights and other conditions to China's trade status, but Peking has warned against any such stipulations as interference in its internal affairs.

The issue is critical to Hong Kong, whose economic lifeblood is trade with China. Hong Kong has warned that trade restrictions could cost it 70,000 jobs and slash its growth rate — 5 per cent last year after averaging eight per cent over the past 20 years — by half.

With trade restrictions, "the people you hurt most are the people at the cutting edge of China's great experiment with economic liberalism," Mr. Patten said in a speech to the National Committee on United States-China Relations, an educational group in New York.

Mr. Patten, appointed in 1992, is expected to be the last British colonial governor before Hong Kong reverts to Chinese control in 1997.

He declined to say what kind of China policy appeared to be shaping up in Washington. He said it would be different from the policy under Mr. Bush, but would not elaborate.

Mr. Clinton must decide by June 3 whether to renew China's most-favoured trade status. Congress can reject the extension. President Clinton's administration plans to press Chinese policymakers on U.S. grievances about human rights and arms exports before the deadline.

In the past few months "we have been talking quietly with China, trying to make as much progress as possible before the president sits down with Congress," to discuss the annual renewal of most-favoured-nation status, said Assistant Secretary of State Winston Lord Thursday.

Mr. Lord said he will follow up the diplomatic talks at meetings with Chinese leaders during an Asian tour starting next week. He also plans to attend the annual ministerial conference of ASEAN, the Association of South East Asian Nations.

The U.S.-China discussions have centred on major American complaints including export of weapons of mass destruction, human rights problems and repression of Tibet," Mr. Lord said. Mr. Lord, a former ambassador in Peking, got a sample of strong feelings in Congress during his first lengthy hearing before the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs.

The cold war has ended and with it any reason "to play the China card against the Russians with those really bloody dictators in Peking," said Rep. Dana Rohrabacher, a Republican.

"I hope you're not going to... say because our businessmen want to make lots of money we must have free-flowing commerce," Mr. Rohrabacher said. That would be taking "blood money from business as usual with a gang of thugs," he added.

Thursday's hearing coincided with reports that China has continued to ship surface-to-surface missiles to Pakistan despite a pledge to stop two years ago.

"We have continuous bits of information and reports, mostly from human sources... that lead us to be concerned that China recently delivered M-11 missiles or parts of missiles to Pakistan," said one U.S. official, who spoke only on condition of anonymity.

State Department spokesman Joseph Snyder said if the administration found "that China has engaged in improper transfers, it will not hesitate to take the action required under U.S. Missile Proliferation Law," that could include trade sanctions.

China Friday rejected as "groundless" the U.S. claims. The report was "groundless," a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman said.

"China's position to observe the guidelines and parameters of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) remains unchanged," he added.

Khmer Rouge threaten big assault in Cambodia

PHUM THMIE, Cambodia (R) — Khmer Rouge guerrillas are poised for a major assault on government-controlled towns in northwestern Cambodia, a senior guerrilla officer said Friday.

Khmer Rouge reinforcements are approaching Sisophon, Battambang and Siem Reap and are poised to attack, he said in an interview, asking not to be named.

"I think the attack on Vietnamese and their puppets will take place in the next few days," he said, referring to the current Phnom Penh government, formed by the Vietnamese who occupied Cambodia from 1979-1989.

The Khmer Rouge also denied Friday its troops attacked U.N. peacekeepers. It said the United Nations had become a hostage to the Phnom Penh administration and had lost control of Cambodia.

The Khmer Rouge has opted out of a 1991 peace agreement and refuses to lay down its arms or take part in multi-party elections scheduled for May 23-27.

The guerrillas have also withdrawn from their jungle stronghold and refuse to attend meetings of the Cambodian all-faction reconciliation body, the Supreme National Council (SNC), because they say it is unsafe.

At a news conference in this Khmer Rouge stronghold near the Thai border, also known as Phum Malai, spokesman Mak Ben said his faction was being slandered for political reasons.

"One of the UNTAC spokesmen and elements inside and outside UNTAC have tried to accuse the NADK (National

Army of Democratic Kampuchea, or Khmer Rouge) for attacks against UNTAC personnel from Japan, India, China and Poland," Mr. Mak Ben said.

UNTAC (the U.N. Transitional Authority in Cambodia) is the official name of the 22,000-strong peacekeeping force.

"The DK spokesman categorically rejects that slanderous accusation motivated by ill political intentions," he said. "It is clear to all that Vietnamese aggressors and their puppets are responsible for the attack."

The UNTAC authorities have lost control of the situation and have become the hostage of the Vietnamese aggressors and their puppets," he said.

UNTAC has blamed the Maoist guerrilla faction for two attacks on peacekeepers Tuesday and one Wednesday.

U.N. officials said the Khmer Rouge ambushed a U.N. convoy, killing one Japanese civilian policeman and wounding eight other peacekeepers.

Later on Tuesday Khmer Rouge guerrillas attacked a Chinese engineering base and adjoining Polish facility with shells, rockets, mortars and small arms, U.N. officials said.

U.N. investigators said an attack on a train northwest of Phnom Penh Wednesday was the work of the Khmer Rouge. At least 13 people were killed and 34 were admitted to hospital after the attack.

The Khmer Rouge also are prime suspects in the early morning attack Friday on a U.N. base in southern Kompong Speu province that caused a Filipino civil

lian police officer to die of a heart attack, a United Nations spokesman said.

Four Bulgarian peacekeepers, a Colombian police officer and a Cambodian guard were wounded in the attack.

While denying the attacks Tuesday and Wednesday the Khmer Rouge spokesman admitted to playing a role in a full-scale assault on northwestern Siem Reap town Monday, which he called a people's revolution "against the Vietnamese aggressors and their puppet."

China has reacted with embarrassment to the actions of its former proteges the Khmer Rouge as the radical group fans the flames of violence in Cambodia.

Two weeks before the United Nations is to hold elections in Cambodia, the Khmer Rouge have unleashed a wave of violence against civilians and U.N. forces, including a Chinese contingent.

The confused and delayed reaction to an attack on their forces by the group that China supported with arms, money and diplomatic backing underlines Peking's embarrassment at the situation.

"The fog surrounding Peking's relations with the Khmer Rouge shows that they no longer have any direct influence and that they want Prince Norodom Sihanouk to return to power," a diplomat source said.

China's Foreign Ministry expressed doubts Thursday about the U.N. statement that the Khmer Rouge had launched a rocket, shell and mortar attack on



At the headquarters of the royalist party in Sisophon, northern Cambodia, a party worker puts up a poster featuring Prince Norodom Sihanouk ahead of Cambodian elections (AFP photo)

Chinese troops after a day earlier.

"It is still unclear who made the bombardment," spokesman Wu Jianmin told journalists Thursday.

For the first time, the official Xinhua News Agency used the name "Khmer Rouge" rather than "the Party of Democratic Kampuchea" in its reports on an emergency session of Cambodia's Supreme National Council held here Thursday but boycotted by the radical Marxist guerrillas.

China has continued to distance itself from the Khmer Rouge, who have decided to boycott elections due from May 23-27.

The head of the U.N. operations in Cambodia, Yasushi Akashi, has stressed that there is "no longer any international dimension" to the problems in Cambodia but the issue remains of regional importance.

Meanwhile, Japan is seriously considering pulling its peacekeeping troops out of Cambodia and has already drawn up an evacuation plan, the Kyodo News Agency reported Friday as a minister called for the men to leave.

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New president vows to unify Sri Lanka

COLOMBO (AFP) — Sri Lankan Premier Dingiri Banda Wijetunga has elected president Friday and vowed to unify this ethnically and politically fragmented island republic and stamp out violence and intolerance.

Parliament unanimously elected Mr. Wijetunga, 71, as successor to assassinated President Ranasinghe Premadasa, who has blown up in a suspected Tamil Tiger guerrilla suicide attack during a May Day rally here.

"My first priority will be to unify the nation. We will explore the possibilities and the impossibilities. Unifying a nation in pieces is a lengthy process," Mr. Wijetunga told reporters just after being elected.

Mr. Wijetunga in his acceptance speech to parliament promised a "new social order" and described his philosophy of life in a Buddhist scripture: "I will do what I say and will not say anything I cannot do."

He called for opposition support to "stamp out violence and other negative and evil forces that mar the sanctity of life."

He said the unanimous approval of his candidature brought to mind a William Shakespeare quotation: "Some have greatness thrust upon them."

"I will endeavour to establish a new social order in which there will not be even a trace of arbitrariness and intolerance. I invite you to join hands with me in working for the achievement of these ideals," Mr. Wijetunga said.

He said he hoped to have a new cabinet and a prime minister appointed within 48 hours but was not planning major changes in the administration because he planned to continue with the open economic policies of his predecessor.

Mr. Wijetunga had no immediate strategy to solve the long-drawn out ethnic conflict between minority Tamils and majority Sinhalese which claims a daily death toll.

"What we have is not a Tamil issue, but a terrorism problem. The LTTE (the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) is an illegal army on our soil and we will have to disarm them," Mr. Wijetunga told reporters in parliament.

He said the investigation into the Premadasa assassination was continuing and declined to confirm a police accusation that the Tamil Tigers were the chief suspects.

However he said the authorities would be compelled to deploy more security personnel for the protection of leaders although he himself did not fear for his life.

"Why should I fear. Life is so uncertain. That is the certainty," Mr. Wijetunga said.

Mr. Wijetunga's election as Sri Lanka's third executive president was greeted by table thumping on both sides of the house but the euphoria was drowned when a leftist firebrand Vasudeva Nanayakkara demanded the government's resignation.

"The government must resign and stage elections," Mr. Nanayakkara, the lone MP from his New Equal Society Party, said. "I'm not a party to these congratulatory messages of the opposition."

Opposition leader Sirima Bandaranaike backed Mr. Wijetunga but asked him to scrap the French-style executive presidency and revert to the Westminster system of parliamentary democracy which the country had till 1978.

China is also seeking to attract more Japanese investment and expand ties with South Korea, the report said, adding that Peking has repeatedly said it supports the principle of a nuclear weapons-free Korean peninsula.

Due to this, Mr. Lee said, China was unlikely to veto any sanctions, although it may not fully cooperate in enforcing them.

The report said China, which last year established ties with Seoul and has been drifting away from Pyongyang, would be unlikely to directly oppose U.N. sanctions because of its need to persuade Washington to renew its most-favoured-nation (MFN) trading status.

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COLUMN

Clinton sees woman president in his lifetime

WASHINGTON (R) — President Bill Clinton has predicted a woman would be elected president in his lifetime and said Americans might find a woman in charge at the White House more acceptable than his wife's high-profile advisory role. "A woman will be elected president probably in my lifetime," Mr. Clinton said. "There might even be less controversy in that than the partnership that Hillary and I have established." Hillary Rodham Clinton has been a highly visible adviser to the new president and heads the administration's health care reform task force. In a joint interview with his wife aired on the NBC television network Friday evening, the president said that thought Americans were "increasingly moving to the position that everybody ought to be able to fulfill their abilities." He acknowledged some Americans had questioned his wife's high profile. But he said it was his "duty... to use all the people I can find to use to help advance the public interest. And I think the fact that we're doing this health care thing together and that she's taken a lead on it is a good thing for the American people," he said.

Bosnia's Eurovision band comes out of Sarajevo

ZACREB (R) — The Fazla Band had to tape their entry for the 1993 Eurovision Song Contest during quiet periods in the siege of Sarajevo so the sound of gunfire would not spoil the recording. Their journey to Ireland, where the 25-nation televised European music contest will be held on May 15, was also probably a little more hazardous than most. On the night the band made the trip across Sarajevo Airport, two other people were killed in the area and 16 wounded in a fierce outbreak of shelling machinegun fire. "Our lives were in constant danger," lead singer Mohammad Fazlagic — nicknamed Fazla — told Reuters in an interview in Zagreb, "there was shooting and shelling while we ran across the airport in the middle of the night." The band made it through to win the regional Eurovision preliminaries in Ljubljana with their haunting ballad "All The Pain In The World," a love song from a soldier defending Sarajevo to his girlfriend. The chorus runs:

"The whole world's pain is in Bosnia tonight, I'm staying here to challenge and to fight, I'm not afraid to stumble and to fall, I'll never stop to sing, They can't take my soul."

Following the break-up of the old Yugoslavia, Bosnia became a member of Eurovision at the beginning of this year. Serbia has been excluded from the competition. The band are determined to use the contest to show that the city is part of Europe.

80 houses burn down in divorce dispute

PHNOM PENH (AFP) — An argument between a divorcing couple was the likely cause of a six-hour fire near Phnom Penh's red light district Friday which burned at least 80 buildings to the ground but caused only minor injuries, government police said. A woman who recently bought the house from the divorcing couple said the husband and wife had argued over how to split the proceeds from the sale, and police said they were seeking to question the husband in connection with arson. Damage to the metal, machinery and electrical shops in the neighbourhood was estimated at \$1 million.

New Indian airline's first flight lands at wrong airport

NEW DELHI (AFP) — The inaugural flight of private Jet Airways, which has promised to give a tough fight to the much-maligned state-run Indian Airlines, landed at the wrong airport Wednesday, the Press Trust of India (PTI) said. The Boeing jet touched down at an air force base on the outskirts of the city of Coimbatore in southern India instead of landing at the civilian airport, the news agency said. Aviation authorities grounded the crew and cancelled the return flight to Bombay, it said. A pilot on secondment from Australia's Ansett Aviation Worldwide was at the controls of the aircraft. An inquiry was likely to be ordered into the incident, which came six days after an Indian Airlines pilot headed an Airbus to New Delhi when it had been scheduled to fly to Bombay.

Yeltsin's drive for new constitution suffers setback

MOSCOW (AFP) — President Boris Yeltsin's drive to establish a presidential republic in Russia with a new constitution suffered a setback Friday when the constitutional commission rejected his draft for the new basic law.

In a resolution, the Commission on Constitutional Reform scrapped Mr. Yeltsin's draft as a whole charging that "several elements violated basic civil rights and the division of powers" between the legislative and the executive authority of the state.

Nikolai Ryabov, deputy speaker of parliament, accused Mr. Yeltsin of attempting to establish a "constitutional monarchy" in Russia and charged that powers vested in the presidency "contained elements close to an autocracy."

Under the Yeltsin draft, Russia would have a strong presidency with power to unilaterally appoint the government and other key officials while the current headline parliament would be replaced by a smaller bicameral legislature.

Deputy and legal expert Oleg Rumyantsev, who has proposed a

separate version for discussion by the National Commission, criticised Mr. Yeltsin's proposal.

"It is a mistake to say that this draft was inspired by models of Latin American dictatorships," he said. "Countries in Latin America rejected this type of constitution 40 or 50 years ago."

The rejection of the draft by the commission, established in 1990 by Mr. Yeltsin and the parliament, would force the Russian leader to sidestep the established legal framework if he chooses to push through his own draft for the new constitution.

Under the current Soviet-era constitution, the full-scale parliament, the Congress of People's Deputies, is the only authority empowered to adopt a new constitution and it has agreed to study drafts approved by the commission.

The Russian leader announced last week that he wanted regional leaders to delegate representatives to a constituent assembly that would be convened in a few weeks time to adopt the new constitution.

Japan is reluctant over new date for Yeltsin visit

TOKYO (AFP) — Japan's Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa accepted Friday Russia's explanation of a second postponement of President Boris Yeltsin's visit to Tokyo but seemed less keen to fix a new date.

"They seem to have their own hope" of suggesting September or October as potential times," Mr. Miyazawa told reporters. "But discussion is needed."

Mr. Miyazawa was speaking after receiving a message from Moscow saying the postponement was due to technical reasons including Mr. Yeltsin's tight schedule.

Foreign Ministry officials said Tokyo planned to send an envoy to Russia to discuss rescheduling, as suggested by a Russian deputy foreign minister when delivering the message Thursday to Japan's ambassador in Moscow.

Mr. Yeltsin upset many in the Japanese government last September when he cancelled a visit to Tokyo at the last minute, citing political problems at home. He was to have discussed the long-running territorial dispute over the Kuril Islands.

He won back some favour in mid-April when he suddenly announced the visit was rescheduled for the end of May.

The latest announcement, made unilaterally through the Russian press, has sparked further resentment against Mr. Yeltsin.

"Yeltsin's capriciousness greatly reduces our confidence in him," the Yomiuri daily wrote Friday.

Officially, the Japanese government is practising damage limitation control.

Police hunt 6th man in alleged plot to kill Havel

PRAGUE (R) — Police were hunting Friday for a foreigner suspected of plotting to assassinate Czech President Vaclav Havel, apparently in retaliation for his call for military intervention in the Bosnian civil war.

Interior Minister Jan Ruzi said Thursday night five foreigners had been arrested and a sixth was on the run after police were tipped off about a conspiracy to kill Mr. Havel, the 56-year-old former dissident who led Czechoslovakia's "velvet revolution" against communism.

Police in several districts of Prague stopped motorists for identity checks and searched cars for weapons Friday.

Newspapers published what they said was the text of an anonymous letter which prompted police to arrest the five men and seize cars and weapons.

The letter, written in fractured

Czech, said extremists from Montenegro were preparing to kill the president because of "the recent speech of Havel in the United States and his statement about Yugoslavia."

At a White House news conference last month, Mr. Havel called for more resolute action to end the fighting in former Yugoslavia and appeared to back air strikes on Serb artillery positions.

The letter gave the nicknames of several of the alleged plotters and said they were being sought by Interpol, the international police organisation, on charges ranging from murder to illegal possession of weapons.

The newspaper Mlada Fronta Dnes quoted an unnamed senior Interior Ministry official as saying the assassination conspiracy should be taken with a pinch of salt.

General charges Peru army killings

LIMA (R) — A Peruvian general who has taken refuge in the U.S. embassy charged that murders by the army were carried out with the knowledge of the highest levels of command but the army denied the charges.

General Rodolfo Robles, bringing a controversial case back into the headlines, said nine students and a professor were killed last July by an intelligence unit operating with the approval and knowledge of army chief General Nicolas Hermoza.

"The crime of La Cantuta (university) was committed by a special intelligence unit operating under the orders of Vladimiro Montesinos, virtual chief of the National Intelligence Service," he said in a hand-written document.

But the army, in a statement late Thursday, said: "General Robles has made grave charges against army commander and other officials without proof to back them up."

It said if he was aware of abuses he had "the moral obligation" to denounce them sooner, adding the document "despite the false charges" would be sent to the military justice tribunal investigating the case.

The charges and counter-charges followed a day of commotion in Lima after troop movements around dawn sparked coup rumours that were later denied by President Alberto Fujimori's office.

Gen. Robles linked his dismissal from a high-level army post last week to his knowledge, obtained by what he called "credible" intelligence sources, of the details of several cases of human rights abuses.

"In 1980, some 100 million people were affected by major disasters. By 1991, this figure had reached 311 million. Over the

U.K. Conservative Party suffers election battering

LONDON (R) — British voters have hammered the Conservative government in local elections, piling pressure on Prime Minister John Major to shift some ministers and reinvigorate his divided party.

Mr. Major conceded Friday that dramatic losses in the council polls and in a by-election were a verdict on his government's performance as